ACPMP Research Foundation Awards $150,000 Changemaker Grant for Appendix Cancer Research in Memory of Katie Centorbi

The grant funds research by Dr. Mohammad Haroon Choudry of UPMC Hillman Cancer Center on crossing the mucinous barrier that keeps therapies from reaching tumors

SPRINGFIELD, PA, UNITED STATES, September 23, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The Appendix Cancer PMP Research Foundation (ACPMP) today announced that its $150,000 Changemaker Research Grant has been awarded to Mohammad Haroon Choudry, MD, surgical oncologist at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center in Pittsburgh. The grant is dedicated in loving memory of Katie Centorbi, whose legacy lives on through work that brings hope to future patients and families affected by appendix cancer and PMP.

> Research is how we change the future of appendix cancer. Dr. Choudry's work goes directly at one of the hardest problems in treating PMP, and we are proud to support it in Katie's memory"
>
> *Jim Carroll, board president, ACPMP*

The Changemaker Research Grant was created to support bold scientific, clinical and translational work with the potential to change our understanding of appendix cancer and pseudomyxoma peritonei (PMP) and ultimately make a difference for patients. The $150,000 award provides an opportunity to support promising ideas that can address critical questions in this rare disease and open new possibilities for treatment.

Dr. Choudry and his team are investigating an innovative approach to a long-standing obstacle in treating appendiceal PMP: the dense mucus that surrounds tumor cells which can prevent chemotherapy from reaching them. The project, titled "MUC2-Targeted Mucolysis and Heat-Triggered Nanotherapeutic Drug Delivery to Overcome the Mucus Barrier in Appendiceal Pseudomyxoma Peritonei," combines targeted mucus-dissolving therapy with heat-activated nanoparticles, turning the barrier itself into a therapeutic target and potentially improving patient outcomes beyond what current treatment can achieve.

“Research is how we change the future of appendix cancer,” said Jim Carroll, board president of ACPMP. “The Changemaker Research Grant exists to back innovative ideas today that could shape the possibilities of tomorrow. Dr. Choudry’s work goes directly at one of the hardest problems in treating PMP, and we are proud to support it in Katie’s memory. We are deeply grateful to The Katie Centorbi Foundation, whose collaboration has been instrumental in advancing our mission and helps make grants like this possible.”

“The mucus barrier is one of the main reasons standard cancer therapies fall short for patients with PMP,” said Dr. Choudry, who also serves as associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. “This grant will allow us to test novel therapeutics designed to overcome the mucus barrier and improve chemotherapy delivery to cancer cells. We are grateful to ACPMP and to the Centorbi family for helping us to further our research in this area.”



Mohammad Haroon Choudry, MD, surgical oncologist at UPMC Hillman Cancer Center in Pittsburgh

The Changemaker Research Grant is one of several awards ACPMP funded in 2026, alongside a Clinical Investigator Award, a Catalyst Research Grant, a Young Investigator Award and travel awards for researchers presenting at national scientific meetings. Grants like these are made possible through the generosity of the ACPMP community, and the foundation is deeply grateful to everyone who supports this work and helps invest in the future of appendix cancer research.

Patients and caregivers can contribute to research directly by joining the free ACPMP Patient Registry, a global natural history study built with the gold standard IAMRARE platform of the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD). Details about the ACPMP registry can be found at acpmp.org/patientregistry. ACPMP will also host its free virtual Appendix Cancer Multi-Regional Symposium on Friday, October 2, 2026, featuring leading experts and presentations from ACPMP-funded researchers; registration is open at acpmp.org.

Appendix cancer is a rare disease, with a growing number of cases diagnosed in younger adults. Together, ACPMP and its supporters are working to create new possibilities for patients and to advance better treatments and, ultimately, a cure.

About The Katie Centorbi Foundation

The Katie Centorbi Foundation was established in Lake St. Louis, Missouri, in memory of Katie Montgomery Centorbi, a wife, mother and daughter who lost her life to appendix cancer. The foundation supports appendix cancer research, education and awareness through ACPMP and funds the Katie Centorbi Scholarship for students at St. Charles West High School, Katie's alma mater. Its annual Katie Centorbi Memorial Golf Tournament benefits ACPMP. Learn more at thekatiecentorbifoundation.com.

About the Appendix Cancer PMP Research Foundation

The Appendix Cancer PMP Research Foundation (ACPMP) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization (EIN 26-2890160) founded in 2008 by a community of people affected by appendix cancer, pseudomyxoma peritonei (PMP), and related peritoneal surface malignancies. ACPMP funds research to find better treatments and a cure, and supports education for health care professionals, patients and families. Learn more at acpmp.org.
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