

For Immediate Release



Media Contact: Missy White
missy@intrepidmg.com
919-805-0767

**The V Foundation Announces Partnership with SAGERSTRONG Foundation
to Fund Cancer Research in Memory of Craig Sager**

\$200,000 V Scholar Grant Awarded for Research Related to Blood Cancers

CARY, NC [January 30, 2019] – The V Foundation for Cancer Research, a top-rated cancer research charity, is excited to announce a partnership with the SAGERSTRONG Foundation, Inc., in memory of Craig Sager, to fund research related to blood cancers. Through the partnership, Stacy Sager, Craig’s widow, and the V Foundation are collaborating to achieve Victory Over Cancer®.

“The SAGERSTRONG Foundation is thrilled to be partnering with the V Foundation and Dr. Ami Bhatt on this very important project,” said Stacy Sager, President of the SAGERSTRONG Foundation. “We hope through Dr. Bhatt’s research, cancer patients can glean valuable information early about dietary changes to arm them in their battle.”

The partnership has awarded a V Scholar Grant to Bhatt for her research project titled, “Precisely Shaping the Intestinal Microbiome to Improve Cancer Therapy Outcomes.” Bhatt’s research will explore how dietary changes might improve the intestinal environment in cancer patients. Her goal is to improve therapies with the information she learns. V Scholar Grants are awarded to early career investigators for their work that is either laboratory-based fundamental research or translational research. Bhatt will receive \$200,000 over a two-year period. The V Foundation and the SAGERSTRONG Foundation will each contribute \$100,000 to the grant.

“I have had the privilege and pleasure of caring for many patients and their families through the course of leukemia treatment,” said Bhatt. “Witnessing their amazing strength, I know that we have made so much progress in treating these tough diseases in the past decade. However, there is so much more that needs to be done. The support of the V Foundation and the SAGERSTRONG Foundation will help me and my lab carry out cutting-edge research that will contribute to transforming how patients, physicians and researchers think about the microbiome and cancer. I am honored to be a V Scholar and am revved up to get to work!”

Craig Sager was a Turner Sports Broadcaster and NBA Sideline Reporter, known for his colorful suits and ties, with a personality to match, and he was a longtime friend of the V Foundation. Sager succumbed to cancer in 2016. A few months prior to his passing, he accepted the Jimmy V Perseverance Award at the 2016 ESPYS for his courageous fight with acute myeloid leukemia. SAGERSTRONG Foundation was founded in 2016 in hope that, one day, leukemia patients and their families will never face the battle the Sagers endured. Stacy Sager and the SAGERSTRONG Foundation previously collaborated with the V Foundation during the 2018 *V Week* with a donation of two of Craig’s jackets to an auction benefiting breakthrough cancer research funded by the V Foundation.

“Stacy’s passion for this work is inspirational,” said Susan Braun, CEO of the V Foundation. “Her commitment to honoring Craig’s memory through innovative research is a testament to him and to her!”

The V Foundation has proudly awarded more than \$225 million for cutting-edge cancer research. The V Foundation holds a 4-star (highest) rating from Charity Navigator, America’s largest evaluator of charities, and is among the top 3% of all charities evaluated. The V Foundation is a GuideStar platinum-rated charity.

For more information about the V Foundation or to donate, please visit www.jimmyv.org.

About the V Foundation for Cancer Research

The V Foundation for Cancer Research was founded in 1993 by ESPN and the late Jim Valvano, legendary North Carolina State University basketball coach and ESPN commentator. The Foundation has funded more than \$225 million in cancer

research grants nationwide. The V Foundation awards 100 percent of direct donations to cancer research and programs. The V Foundation's endowment covers administrative expenses. The Foundation awards peer-reviewed grants through a competitive awards process strictly supervised by a Scientific Advisory Committee. For more information on the V Foundation or to make a donation, please visit www.jimmyv.org.

About the SAGERSTRONG Foundation

The mission of the SAGERSTRONG Foundation is to give hope to those who need it most. Stacy and Craig Sager started the SAGERSTRONG Foundation in the hope that, one day, leukemia patients and their families will never have to go through the battle they have endured. For more information, please visit sagerstrongfoundation.org.

###