



For Immediate Release

Contact: Camille Rosa, 952-687-7750

camille@abreathofhope.org

May 21, 2024

Minneapolis, MN. — The A Breath of Hope Lung Foundation today announced the recipient of its *Julie Swedberg YOLO Lung Cancer Award*, which recognizes one individual for their outstanding contributions to the U.S. lung cancer research field and lung cancer patient outcomes.

The 2024 Award Recipient:

- **Jessica Konen, PhD, of Emory University Winship Cancer Institute** will receive this national award in recognition and support of her work entitled *MiR-29 as a master regulator of anti-tumor immunity*. The project focuses on defining a novel mechanism of resistance to immune checkpoint inhibitor treatments in lung cancer.

A Breath of Hope Lung Foundation is a Minnesota-based nonprofit focused on improving U.S. lung cancer survival, currently at 26.6%. Research award recipients are early career investigators whose work exemplifies excellence with far reaching impact here and around the world. Recipients of this \$150,000 award participate in a rigorous vetting process with scoring and evaluations conducted by experts in the lung cancer field. Only the most competitive research projects are funded.

Dr. Konen will be honored at the A Breath of Hope Lung Run/Walk on Saturday, August 10, 2024, at Lake Harriet in Minneapolis, Minnesota. More information can be found at abreathofhope.org.

Julie A. Swedberg, for whom the award is named, was 48 years old when she passed away peacefully in her sleep. She had never smoked. Her courageous 7-year battle with lung cancer ended on Saturday, April 1, 2023, leaving behind a loving husband, two teenaged sons and many family members and friends who miss her. She was a dear friend of and committed volunteer at A Breath of Hope Lung Foundation.

From the family of Julie Swedberg:

Though Julie is no longer with us in body, she will forever remain a cherished presence in our lives - a beacon of hope and source of strength. As we reflect on her life and the profound impact she made on each of us and the lung cancer community, we are so thankful to have the 2024 YOLO award named for her. It will remind us of the importance of cherishing every moment, embracing every opportunity, and living each day with the same courage, grace, and unwavering determination that defined Julie's remarkable spirit.

Congratulations to Dr. Konen, and to the lung cancer community that will profit from her work. Keep fighting and always remember, YOLO (you only live once)!

Eric, Owen and Charlie Swedberg, and Kris Erickson