THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

ACCELERATING *the* CURE

FALL 2005 NEWSLETTER

MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION AWARDS APPROXIMATELY $2 MILLION FOR FOUR PARKINSON'S CLINICAL STUDIES

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) awarded approximately $2 million to researchers to carry out four clinical studies under its recently launched Clinical Discovery program. The Clinical Discovery program is intended to stimulate well-designed clinical research projects focused on potentially high-impact approaches to the field of Parkinson's disease. Funding for the entire program was made possible by a gift from The Pioneer Fund, a private family foundation that supports various philanthropic endeavors including medical research.

"The Fox Foundation's innovative approach to accelerating a cure for Parkinson's reflects the pioneering spirit of our founder, philanthropist Helen M. McLoraine," said Scott Hamilton, Olympic gold medalist and Pioneer Fund Board member. "We are impressed that The Michael J. Fox Foundation is a lean organization that has chosen not to build an endowment, but instead to disperse the money they raise quickly to researchers on the front line."

The Pioneer Fund is a private family foundation established by Helen M. McLoraine, a pioneer who broke new ground for women by assuming leadership roles in the oil and gas business in the 1950s. Influenced by her mother, Mrs. McLoraine established The Pioneer Fund to continue her lifelong support of projects and organizations that focus on medical research, education and social welfare. As a philanthropist, Mrs. McLoraine also supported more than 50 amateur skaters including Scott Hamilton.

Currently, there is limited funding available for researchers to carry out small–to–medium sized innovative clinical research projects applying current knowledge regarding Parkinson's disease directly to patients and patient care.

"The Foundation is working to bridge the disparity that exists between scientists who don't have the resources to validate their hypotheses in the clinic and industry that has no incentive to support projects before a hypothesis is validated because it's too much of a risk," said Deborah W. Brooks, president and chief executive officer of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. "We've taken a strategic look at roadblocks to new therapies and this was one of several areas where we think we can make a difference."

The Foundation awarded a grant to a team in China to carry out the first-ever multi-center, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study to investigate the safety, tolerability and potential neuroprotective effects of green tea polyphenols in people with Parkinson's disease. The team will work in collaboration with Foundation Scientific Advisory Board member Caroline M. Tanner, MD, PhD, who has extensive clinical expertise. If successful, the study could lead to the development of an inexpensive, non-pharmaceutical therapy to slow or stop the progression of the disease. Green tea polyphenols are natural anti-oxidants found in green tea and used in many countries for the treatment of heart disease and cancer. The study will enroll approximately 400 people with early-stage Parkinson's disease. A network of Parkinson's research centers and the Chinese Ministry of Health will collaborate on the project.

Another grant recipient will test a novel strength training technique to improve respiration and swallowing in people who have developed dysphagia, a common condition experienced by people with ***Continued on Back Cover***

NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Increasingly, we are focusing on ways to systematically shepherd advances from the lab to meaningful clinical outcomes. In this issue, you will read about three such efforts: our Clinical Discovery, Biomarkers II and Target Validation programs. All focus on bridging the translational gap, as does our groundbreaking LEAPS program.

Translational research is risky. Breakthroughs may show great promise in early lab data or animal models, but not pass muster against the rigorous testing that precedes clinical trials. In fact, only a fraction reach the clinical trial stage at all, with fewer still surviving to become viable patient therapies for patients.

As a private foundation, our job is to assume these greater risks and use our capital intelligently to remove roadblocks to developing better therapies and, eventually, a cure. For these reasons, we are continuing our leadership in the high-risk/high-reward field of biomarker research, are launching the target validation program to accelerate testing of compounds and, with clinical discovery, are funding pilot studies crucial to larger trials.

There may be no single approach to funding research. But we are convinced that the best way to speed new treatments for Parkinson's is a combination of willingness to take risks, strategic use of capital to fill gaps and zealous focus on the ultimate goal of improving treatment and curing the disease.

Warm regards,

Debi Brooks

Deborah W. Brooks
President and CEO

IN THIS ISSUE

FOX FOUNDATION AWARDS $1.5 MILLION TO FURTHER DRUG DEVELOPMENT AND DISCOVERY EFFORT IN PARKINSON'S

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) has awarded $1.5 million to fund seven projects that each aim to validate therapeutic drug targets for Parkinson's disease. The Target Validation initiative is the first in a series of funding efforts under the Foundation's Drug Discovery and Development program, designed to accelerate the rate at which new Parkinson's therapies are brought to market.

"Developing marketable therapies is an intricate process that requires extensive screening and testing of potential targets before they can be brought to the clinical development stage," said Ken Olden, PhD, chief scientific advisor for MJFF. "This program supports the applied science critical to legitimizing identified drug targets, and opens the door for the later phases of research that will eventually bring these therapies to patients."

Target validation is a key step in the drug discovery process that employs compound screens and animal models to determine whether a molecular target is critically involved in a disease and to ascertain whether this target can be modified in a way that affects disease symptoms and progression. Advances in research, technology and genomics have increased the number of promising therapeutic targets for Parkinson's disease; however, neither academics nor industry has devoted sufficient resources to validate them. This dearth of funding has impeded the development of marketable therapies.

"The Foundation has taken the lead in validating some of the most promising molecular targets, increasing the likelihood that some will yield new therapies for Parkinson's," said Deborah W. Brooks, MJFF president and chief executive officer. "We believe that this program could serve to jumpstart the research and development process, as industry seeks to further develop promising results."

Three of the awardees will target alpha-synuclein, a compound which frequently aggregates in people with Parkinson's. Despite this association, there is not consensus as to whether alpha-synuclein aggregation plays a direct role in the loss of dopamine neurons in the brain; thus, validation of alpha-synuclein is vitally important to the field. Of the three grants, one will use rodent models to target and modulate several cellular pathways that are hypothesized to block the toxic effects of a mutated form of alpha-synuclein. The other two grants will look more specifically at ways to lower alpha-synuclein levels or prevent its ability to aggregate.

Continued on Next Page

DRUG DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANT RECIPIENTS

Patrick Aebischer, PhD
Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL)
Testing of Small Molecules in Alpha Synuclein Rat Model of PD

David Bumcrot, PhD
Alnylam Pharmaceuticals
In vivo Target Validation: RNA Interference to Silence Alpha-Synuclein in Parkinson's Disease Mouse Models

Angela Cenci-Nilsson, PhD
Lund University
Metabotropic Glutamate Receptors in L-Dopa-induced Dyskinesia

P. Jeffrey Conn, PhD
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
Discovery of Allosteric Potentiators of mGluR7 as Novel Antiparkinsonian Agents

Anthony L. Fink, PhD
University of California, Santa Cruz
Validating Toxic Protein Aggregation as a Therapeutic Target in Parkinson's Disease

Raul R. Gainetdinov, PhD
Duke University
Screening of Small Molecule Libraries to Identify Trace Amine Receptor Ligands Active in Treatment of Parkinson's Disease

Paul J. Hergenrother, PhD
University of Illinois
Inhibitors of Poly (ADP-Ribose)
Glcyohodrolase (PARG) as Novel Agents for the Treatment of Parkinson's Disease

FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES GRANTS FOR PARKINSON'S BIOMARKER RESEARCH BRINGING TOTAL INVESTMENT TO NEARLY $4 MILLION

FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO LEAD EFFORTS TO IMPROVE DIAGNOSIS OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND ACCELERATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF TREATMENTS TO SLOW OR STOP THE DISEASE

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) recently announced grant recipients for its Biomarkers II program, a two-year research program designed to accelerate the development and validation of a biomarker of Parkinson's disease. A biomarker would help physicians accurately identify individuals at risk for Parkinson's disease, serve as an indicator for the onset of neurodegeneration and the onset of clinical disease and would enable physicians to track disease progression. The Foundation, with a lead gift from the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation, will provide up to $1.8 million in funding to six research teams, assuming certain project milestones are met. The Parkinson's Disease Foundation and the Parkinson's Unity Walk also contributed funds to support the Biomarkers II program.

"Focused work to identify a reliable biomarker or series of biomarkers is critical first and foremost for physicians to accurately diagnose the disease. Advances will also impact drug development efforts, enabling researchers to validate that a particular drug is having the desired clinical effect," said Deborah W. Brooks, president and chief executive officer of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. "The Foundation has directed nearly $4 million in this priority area to date."

The development of a reliable biomarker would dramatically accelerate research into the etiology and pathophysiology of Parkinson's disease, including the testing of new drugs and other neuroprotective strategies. The Foundation reviewed proposals from applicants worldwide studying clinical and biological biomarkers and ultimately awarded grants to six teams.

One team led by Daniela Berg, MD will compare brain ultrasounds of people with Parkinson's disease to brain ultrasounds taken from people without the disease to identify characteristics unique to Parkinson's. If validated, this approach has the potential to be a side-effect free, highly sensitive technique to improve the accuracy of early diagnosis of Parkinson's disease.

Another team hypothesizes that olfactory (sense of smell) functioning may be a useful predictor of Parkinson's disease and its progression. Olfactory dysfunction occurs in an estimated 80 to 90 percent of people with Parkinson's and is characterized by an inability to identify and detect smells or differentiate between smells. It is more common than tremor and may pre-date the onset of motor symptoms by several years. The researchers aim to quantify olfactory functioning in people with Parkinson's compared with people who don't have the disease and to track changes over time.

A team from Baylor College of Medicine is interested in the protein known as NURR1 that is essential for the development and survival of dopaminergic neurons. They hope to validate earlier studies which found that levels of NURR1 messenger RNA are significantly lower in the blood of people with Parkinson's disease.

Previously, the Foundation funded work to identify genetic mutations and patterns of gene expression associated with Parkinson's disease. In this round of funding, a team from the University of Washington will use an innovative technique to analyze the patterns of all proteins found in the human cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) of people with a confirmed diagnosis of Parkinson's. The protein patterns observed in the Parkinson's patients will be compared to those observed in the matched controls who don't have the disease in the hopes of validating which proteins (and protein patterns) are unique to the disease. If successful, this approach could also help researchers track disease progression and identify those with Parkinson's at risk for developing dementia.

This program was funded with a lead gift from the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation in memory of its founder Mr. Edmond J. Safra. Considered by many to have been among the greatest bankers of his generation, Mr. Safra was also an extraordinary philanthropist. He contributed to countless humanitarian, religious, educational and cultural causes all over the world. He was deeply committed to the search for a cure for neurodegenerative diseases, in particular Parkinson's disease, and made the support of medical research in this field one of the key objectives when he established the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation. He shared his devotion to this cause with his wife, Mrs. Lily Safra, a member of the Board of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research and, since her husband's passing in 1999, Chairman of the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation.

BIOMARKER II GRANT AWARDEES

Daniela Berg, MD
Hertie-Institute for Clinical Brain Research
Specificity & Sensitivity of Transcranial Ultrasound as Biomarker in Parkinson's Disease

John Duda, MD
Philadelphia VA Medical Center
Longitudinal Assessment of Olfactory Dysfunction in Early PD

Omar M. El-Agnaf, PhD
United Arab Emirates University
Development of Lewy Bodies MRI Imaging Agents for the Early Diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders

Weidong Le, MD, PhD
Baylor College of Medicine
Reduction of Nurr1 mRNA in Human Peripheral Blood Lymphocytes as a Biomarker of Parkinson's Disease

Mary Maral Mouradian, MD
University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Epigenetic Regulation of the Alpha-synuclein Gene as a Biomarker of Susceptibility to Parkinson's Disease

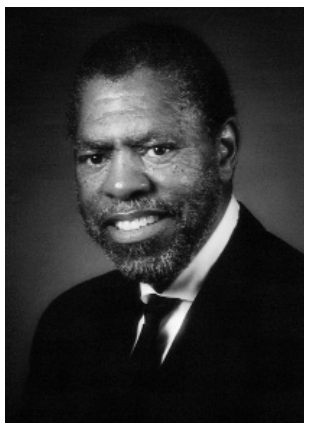
Jing Zhang, MD, PhD
University of Washington
Biomarkers in Human Cerebrospinal Fluid

"DRUG DEVELOPMENT" CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

Although current drug approaches for relieving Parkinson's symptoms generally target the dopamine signaling system in the brain, side effects from this approach such as uncontrollable dyskinesias can be problematic. Two grants will look at non-dopamine signaling pathways in the brain as potential targets for symptomatic therapies. One project will focus on a novel target, trace amine receptors, while another grant recipient will study the metabotropic glutamate receptor, mGluR7. The hope is that both targets can provide improved symptomatic relief without causing debilitating side effects. Another funded project will focus on other forms of the metabotropic glutamate receptor that may be useful for treating levodopa-induced dyskinesias.

Finally, other targets to be studied by grant recipients in this program include poly (ADP-ribose) glycohydrolase (PARG), believed to play a critical role in the midbrain neuronal death associated with Parkinson's.

Q & A WITH KENNETH OLDEN, PhD, MJFF'S NEW CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR



Kenneth Olden, PhD, recently joined The Michael J. Fox Foundation as its chief scientific advisor. Prior to joining the Foundation, he spent 13 years as the director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), an Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and since 1991, as head of the National Toxicology Program (NPT).

Dr. Olden is an internationally recognized researcher in cancer biology and the first African American to become director at the National Institutes of Health. He earned a B.S. from Knoxville College, an M.S. from the University of Michigan and, in 1970, a doctorate in biology from Temple University. He performed much of the research for that doctorate at the University of Rochester, where he was presented with an honorary degree of Doctor of Sciences in May 2003.

A cell biologist and biochemist, Dr. Olden actively researched the properties of cell surface molecules and their roles in human cancer at Harvard University and the National Cancer Institute. In 1985, he became director of the Howard University Cancer Center and professor and chairman of the Howard Department of Oncology. It was while serving there he was appointed as director of NIEHS.

AS A FORMER DIRECTOR AT NIH, WHAT DROVE YOU TO MAKE THE TRANSITION INTO THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND JOIN THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH?

After devoting approximately 35 years to research that emphasized the investigator-initiated research model, I concluded that there needed to be a better balance between investigator–initiated basic research and directed, translational and interdisciplinary research. I was impressed with The Michael J. Fox Foundation model that emphasizes accountability and deliverables with respect to discoveries that can lead to prevention or cure for Parkinson's disease; the goals are very clear. While publication and peer recognition of MJFF-sponsored research is important, much more is expected.

WITHIN THE PARKINSON'S COMMUNITY, THERE HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT ATTENTION GIVEN LATELY TO THE ROLE OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN PARKINSON'S DISEASE. WILL THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT AFFECT THE DIRECTION OF THE FOUNDATION'S FUNDING AND HOW DO YOU THINK THE FOUNDATION CAN BEST IMPACT RESEARCH IN THIS AREA?

The realization that the environment is a major contributor to the development of Parkinson's and other chronic diseases is long overdue. In my opinion, we have made so little progress in developing effective treatment for such diseases because of simplistic thinking and use of simplistic models in medical research. Sufficient data now exists that blows away the myth that diseases such as PD, Alzheimer's, cancer, asthma, etc. are caused by "bad" genes alone. Such diseases are caused by complex interactions between genes and chemical, physical and behavioral factors in the environment. Yes, I am confident that the investments of MJFF and other funding agencies will be influenced by this new scientific reality.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR STRATEGY FOR BUILDING THE MJFF PORTFOLIO MOVING FORWARD?

I am fully supportive of the Foundation's current investment strategy: that is, to identify a few critical areas of investigation, assemble a team of world-class researchers, give them the needed resources, and charge them with the responsibility of solving the various problems. This will require proactive leadership and oversight on the part of the Foundation's scientific advisory board and staff. The key to success is being proactive in identifying problems, building strong interdisciplinary research teams and assigning responsibility to solve specific problems.

WHAT KINDS OF CHANGES DO YOU ENVISION, IF ANY, TO MJFF'S CURRENT MISSION OR ITS EXECUTION THEREOF?

The mission is driven by the Board of Directors, the President and CEO and by Michael J. Fox with the assistance and support of outstanding advisors and in-house scientific leadership. Collectively, the team has decided to become more strategic in driving the research agenda. While the Foundation has been proactive in soliciting grant applications to fill specific research needs, we intend to be more aggressive in identifying the highest priorities and bringing together the very best scientists to create interdisciplinary research teams. Furthermore, we intend to be more actively engaged with the research teams to promote sharing of information and resources. There are many gaps in our knowledge of the development and progression of PD, but some are less critical than others in finding an effective treatment strategy.

WHAT WILL BE YOUR FOREMOST PRIORITIES AS CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR TO THE FOUNDATION?

My top priority is to work cooperatively with the Board of Directors, the senior leadership and research staff to mobilize the scientific community to make certain, (1) that some of the best scientists are working on PD, (2) that we are working on problems that are most promising in terms of finding a cure for the disease and (3) that we are leveraging our resources and employing the most efficient mechanisms and processes to get the job done.

IN WHAT AREAS DO YOU THINK MJFF IS BEST SITUATED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROGRESS OF RESEARCH WITHIN THE PARKINSON'S COMMUNITY?

The culture of accountability and risk-taking is what attracted me to the Foundation. These attributes of the Foundation, plus the decision to keep the staff and administration as small as possible, make the organization more nimble then most other funding agencies. Therefore, the major breakthroughs in PD are likely to occur through funding provided by MJFF, even though the relative amount of funding provided by the organization is small. The Foundation is on target to play a major role in identifying the causes of PD and in developing prevention and treatment strategies. When PD is finally conquered, MJFF will have played a major role.

WHAT STRENGTHS DOES A SMALLER, MORE STREAMLINED ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE FOUNDATION BRING TO THE RESEARCH FIELD THAT MAY BE ABSENT FROM A LARGE PUBLIC ORGANIZATION SUCH AS NIEHS?

The culture of risk-taking, the proactive involvement in the conduct of the science and nimble management are the advantages that MJFF enjoys. The NIH system is very bureaucratic and is averse to risk-taking. Also, the NIH has more than 100 years of tradition and numerous stakeholders that can make change difficult.

In summing up, let me say that the practice of science can be more than an exercise in logic.

Continued on Next Page

FOUNDATION CONTINUES GDNF RESEARCH

More than one year has passed since Amgen halted its clinical trial of GDNF (glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor), and the Michael J. Fox Foundation continues to pursue its plans to investigate alternative delivery mechanisms for the compound. The main project under the Foundation's LEAPS program: take encapsulated cell technology (ECT) delivery of GDNF from a theoretical concept to a therapeutic reality.

In July, a team from the Foundation's scientific advisory board met with a multinational team of researchers in Sweden to gauge progress to date against specific milestones. The assessment was that the effort, headed up by Olle Lindvall, MD, PhD, of the University of Lund in Sweden, is right on track.

ECT is an emerging therapy that offers a potential clinical approach to controlled delivery of a pharmaceutical agent to a precise location in the brain for an extended time.

The Lindvall team plans to use ECT to enable localized, long-term sustained delivery of GDNF to the brain. Cells engineered to produce GDNF are enclosed in a non-biodegradable sac, which is then implanted in the region of the brain, called the striatum, where dopamine neurons send their signals. Because the sac is non-biodegradable, the patient's brain is less likely to reject the foreign cells; the GDNF passes through the sac, however, for the primary purpose of protecting dopamine neurons and stimulating their regeneration. The $3-million project is intended to last four years, with full funding contingent upon the achievement of predetermined scientific milestones.

The team's first milestone was to generate human cell lines capable of steadily secreting small amounts of GDNF. The team also had to demonstrate that it had found a way to place these cells in retrievable fiber capsules which could pass certain tests set forth by the review committee, including tests to probe cell viability, level and duration of GDNF secretion and diffusion into the brain. The reviewers at the assessment meeting agreed that the research team met the criteria they had set forth and were thus eligible to receive the next round of funding and continue to the second phase of the project.

"Completion of the directed milestones allows the team to push forward at the pace we anticipated," said Deborah W. Brooks, president and CEO of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. "This achievement indicates real possibilities in the creation of a viable GDNF-producing cell line, as well as a device to transfer the cells to humans."

One of the unique aspects of the LEAPS program infrastructure is that it calls for close collaboration with the Foundation during every phase of the project. In addition to reviewing work already completed, the Foundation's team also took time to refine and detail the upcoming milestones. They concluded that the next phase should not only focus on the continued development of the cell line, but also include further studies on the long-term toxicity and efficacy of GDNF. This forward-thinking allows the scientific coalition to anticipate and resolve potential issues so that the ultimate clinical trial can quickly proceed.

"The assessment process has allowed for major insights and has been helpful in allowing the team to plan and strategize in incredible detail well before the ultimate clinical trial actually begins," stated Dr. Lindvall. "We believe that this type of anticipation will pay off immensely when we are ready to start the clinical trial, helping us to manage the whole process in seamless fashion."

Prior studies of GDNF in Parkinson's disease have shown positive effects in animal models as well as in early clinical trials. Recently, preliminary results from the controversial Amgen phase II trial employing a catheter delivery system showed no overall significant clinical improvement after six months. However questions remain about the delivery system and the overall efficacy of the compound. This LEAPS project will help resolve and advance understanding of GDNF's therapeutic potential, as well as potential delivery system variables. Should this therapy prove effective, 12 patients will be enrolled in clinical trials in Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and the U.K. and assessed clinically for at least 24 months.

Funded under the LEAPS program, this grant was made possible through a lead gift from Anne and Bernard Spitzer, with matching funds provided by members of the Foundation's Board of Directors.

STUDY SHOWS PROBABLE LINK BETWEEN PARKINSON'S AND PESTICIDES

A strong connection exists between Parkinson's disease and common pesticides, according to the "Geoparkinson" study published in New Scientist on May 26, 2005.

Researchers found that exposure to chemicals in pesticides correlated with a higher incidence of Parkinson's. The study compared 767 volunteers in Scotland, Italy, Sweden, Romania and Malta who had PD with 1,989 control individuals who had similar backgrounds but were healthy. The results suggested that low users of pesticides, such as amateur gardeners, are 9% more likely than non-users to develop Parkinson's, while high users such as farmers are 43% more likely to do so.

The report states that the results of the study were compelling enough to affirm the need for gardeners and farmers to wear protective gear when handling pesticides. The study did not pinpoint any specific pesticides, however, and also identified several other risk factors that may be involved with the development of Parkinson's. These include having a family history of the disease and being knocked unconscious at least once.

"DR. OLDEN" CONT'D FROM PAGE 4

The trait that allows one to differentiate the superstars within the galaxy of stars of the scientific enterprise is instinct. Both stars and superstars have access to the same facts and advice, but scientists and funding agencies who would be superstars have the tendency to process the information at a subconscious level to invoke a different response. In the end, I believe instinct will be the characteristic that will distinguish MJFF from others; how we process information and advice to make funding decisions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FOUNDATION PLEASE VISIT US AT WWW.MICHAELJFOX.ORG

WINE LOVERS GET TASTE FOR FUNDRAISING

A wine tasting at the Corning, NY, Radisson Hotel raised almost $3,200 for The Michael J. Fox Foundation last May. The event was sponsored by Bottles and Corks, a wine shop that hosts tastings for charity. Shop owners Mary Beth and Rick Maxa were assisted by Gale Galusha in organizing this spring's event. They donated the proceeds to The Michael J. Fox Foundation in honor of Gale's husband, who suffers from Parkinson's.

The $10 price of admission, donated entirely to the Foundation, included unlimited wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres. The event featured 64 different selections from eight Finger Lake Region wineries; two local retailers sold the selected wines by the bottle, donating a portion of the proceeds to the event. Several gift items were also raffled off to guests. The Fox Foundation raises its glass to the event's planners and participants.

JOIN THE TEAM: TEAM FOX

Organizing a fundraising event is a great way to support The Michael J. Fox Foundation and raise awareness and funding for Parkinson's research. Starting this fall, those who wish to raise money for the Foundation will have a new way to officially designate their event as an MJFF benefit: Team Fox. Anyone can join, whether organizing a golf tournament, running a race, or simply collecting donations from friends.

An annual fee will allow Team Fox members to download materials that make it easy and fun to stage an event. These include the Team Fox logo; customizable form letters to enlist sponsors and thank donors; sample press releases to publicize the event and the cause; and donor tracking forms. Members will also be invited to an annual spring recognition event in New York City.

Team Fox kicks off on Sunday, November 6, when 25 runners, each of whom has committed to raise $2,500 for MJFF, will sport the Team Fox logo in the ING New York City Marathon.

For more information about Team Fox, contact Amanda McDorman, Special Gifts Officer, at amcdorman@michaeljfox.org.

LEMONADE STAND HELPS "SQUEEZE OUT PARKINSON'S"

Running a lemonade stand outside the entrance of her home, Haley Lynn Milner raised over $300 for Parkinson's in just two hours of business. Haley, a native of Hoschton, GA lost her father, Seixas Milner, to Parkinson's disease three years ago. She decided she wanted to do her part to contribute to the fundraising and research efforts of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. Having run lemonade stands in the past near her home at Green Pastures Farms, she thought that doing so again would be an excellent way to raise money for MJFF. With the help of her family and friends, including Miss Teen Georgia Galaxy 2005, Kayla Pellum, Haley sold cups of lemonade for $1 apiece and handed out bookmarks, newsletters and preprinted envelopes supplied to her by the Foundation. In addition to $321 that came directly from lemonade sales, Haley expects more donations to trickle in from her efforts.

The "Squeeze Out Parkinson's" project was chosen by Duke University to feature in their upcoming quarterly magazine and Haley is already planning a Family Golf tournament to continue fundraising.

Haley Lynn Milner and friends take a "stand" against Parkinson's disease

McENROE ACES PARKINSON'S

Michael J. Fox and John McEnroe at press conference for LTU Champions Trophy

The LTU Champions Trophy, a tennis tournament organized by John McEnroe to benefit The Michael J. Fox Foundation and the Retreat for Domestic Violence Services, was held the weekend of August 18 in Amagansett, Long Island, raising over $50,000. The first Champions level event in the United States since 2001, the tournament featured eight legendary players: John McEnroe, Goran Ivanesivec, Pat Cash, Guillermo Vilas, Anders Jarryd, Aaron Krickstein, Mansour Bahrami and Peter McNamara.

The tournament was played in four afternoon sessions of two singles and one doubles match each. Each session was highlighted by a silent auction for the public, with a simultaneous live auction at a party held for the players to specifically benefit MJFF.

Michael J. Fox joined McEnroe in July to announce the tournament. At the press conference, held in Grand Central Station, McEnroe stated, "The LTU Champions Trophy is a wonderful opportunity to bring classic tennis to Long Island, where I learned to play the game. It is also great that our efforts will help support two organizations doing very important work."

The tournament was sponsored by LTU, a German-based airline. Now in its fifth year of operations, LTU offers several non-stop international flights, including flights between New York and Düsseldorf, which it added in May 2005.

L–R: Michael J. Fox, Monsignor Thomas Hartman, President and CEO of the Thomas Hartman Foundation for Parkinson's Research and a member of the Board of Directors of the Fox Foundation, and Dr. James Watson, Chancellor of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, at the Second Annual Cure for Sure Dinner of the Thomas Hartman Foundation for Parkinson's Research. The dinner, held in June at Huntington Town House in Huntington, New York, was attended by more than 1,400 guests and raised over $600,000 in support of the Hartman Foundation's mission to find a cure for Parkinson's disease.

PARTY LIKE A FOX

Party Like a Fox," an event geared toward young professionals in New York City, brought in almost $50,000 for The Michael J. Fox Foundation. Organizers Genna and Gene Gurkoff, Sharon and Leon Richter and Dana and Scott Landis all came together in an effort to raise money based on the unifying fact that each has a grandparent who suffers from Parkinson disease. They came up with the idea for the fundraising event after they all participated in the Parkinson's Unity Walk together.

The committee chose a Spanish restaurant called Barna (located in the Giraffe Hotel) as the event site. In keeping with the restaurant's theme, both mojitos and tapas were served, in addition to specialty orange-colored drinks chosen to tie in colors of the Foundation's logo. Frequent prize packages were given away to guests throughout the night. The packages included items donated from various sponsors including Craft Restaurant, Maui Jim Sunglasses, the New Jersey Nets, Barney's, Chelsea Piers, Dean & Deluca, Linens 'n Things, William H. Connely & Co., the New York Trapeze School, Rita Hazan Salon and Trish McEvoy.

Tickets to the event cost $60 ahead of time and $75 at the door. The event itself raised over $25,000, but the help of a generous matching donor increased the grand total to $50,000 for the Foundation. The committee members hope to organize a similar event in the future.

Event Planners from Left to Right: Dana Landis, Gene Gurkoff, Genna Gurkoff & Scott Landis

MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION VOLUNTEER HONORS FATHER

Beth Rosendahl, Andread White, Ron White, and Sara White

After seeing her father's life change dramatically due to Parkinson's disease, Andrea White was called to action, becoming a dedicated volunteer of The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. Upon the death of her father, Ron White, in July 2005, Andrea and her family continued to honor him and his fight with PD by committing themselves to the funding of research and the fight against the disease through MJFF. In lieu of flowers, the family asked that Ron's friends and family make donations to the Foundation. That request has helped raise over $4,000 for the Foundation to date.

Despite the struggle with his illness, Mr. White remained vibrant in the community throughout his life. His legacy includes generous commitments to several organizations in the Madison, WI, area including the local Rotary chapter, where he was recently honored as Emeritus Treasurer; the Jaycees, where he helped open the Henry Vilas Children's Zoo; and the Endowment Board for Bethel Lutheran Church, where he served as a chair. Mr. White also spent a significant amount of his time volunteering on various medical boards.

Though he made his living as a banker turned stockbroker, one of Mr. White's accomplishments was working his way through college by starting his own business, Cedar Hills Rides Inc., and operating a pony ring for children at the Henry Vilas Zoo. Because of his early involvement with the Zoo, his family will further honor Mr. White by purchasing one of the Zoo's park benches and an animal on the Zoo's new endangered species themed carousel as a memorial to him.

Mr. White is survived by wife, Carolyn; his three daughters, Sara and Andrea White and Beth Rosendahl; and Beth's husband, John, and their three children, Marcus, Jake and Julia Rosendahl. Mr. White's gentle spirit and sense of humor touched many lives. He will be greatly missed.

MJFF GETS BOOST FROM IRON MAN

Janna Gillick poses with her bike during the Ironman competition held in Coeur d'Alene, ID

Janna Gillick successfully completed her first Ironman race and raised $4,000 for Parkinson's research in the process. The race, which consisted of a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run was held in Coeur d'Alene, ID, a city often referred to as Idaho's Lake City. Janna began her preparation in January 2005 for the race which was held on June 26. She enlisted the assistance of a coach to set up a training plan and to make sure she was working at the appropriate pace. Already an avid mountain biker, Janna threw herself into training and focused on little else. Prompted by an e-mail from the Janus Charity Challenge, Janna realized that incorporating fundraising into her race would be an excellent way to create balance and stay connected with family and friends throughout the rigorous training process. She chose The Michael J. Fox Foundation as the beneficiary of her efforts because both her father and grandfather had Parkinson's. Although her grandfather passed away several years ago, her father remains active, frequently biking, walking and swimming despite the effects of the disease.

Janna finished the entire race in 12 hours, 34 minutes and 46 seconds.

INTERESTED IN ORGANIZING A FUNDRAISER FOR MJFF?

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR GUIDELINES AND GET SOME IDEAS BY VISITING THE "HOW TO HELP" SECTION AT WWW.MICHAELJFOX.ORG

THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

Grand Central Station, P.O. Box 4777
New York, New York 10163
www.michaeljfox.org

FALL 2005 NEWSLETTER

"CLINICAL DISCOVERIES" CONT'D FROM PAGE 1

Parkinson's disease that occurs when the muscles that are involved in swallowing weaken or do not work properly. People with dysphagia have trouble swallowing and are at increased risk of inhaling food or liquids into the airways, which can lead to a condition known as "aspiration pneumonia" — the leading cause of death in people with Parkinson's.

Given that currently there are no treatments for dysphagia, this pilot study has the potential to have an immediate impact on patient care.

Two other teams are using Positron Emission Tomography (PET) imaging in novel ways to quantify changes in the brain associated with the onset of Parkinson's disease and co-morbid conditions. One project seeks to quantify reductions in cortical acetylcholinesterase (AChE) activity (cholinergic deficits) that occur in people with Parkinson's and Parkinson's-associated dementia. Researchers believe that reductions in AChEs may be responsible for the cognitive impairment commonly seen in people with Parkinson's. Dopaminergic therapies don't reverse cognitive impairment, suggesting that targeting the cholinergic system could be beneficial. AChEs are currently used to treat people with Alzheimer's but may be even more valuable for people with Parkinson's.

The other project will use PET imaging to compare the blood-brain barrier of people with Parkinson's disease to those who do not have the disease. It is hypothesized that biochemical changes that occur in the blood-brain barrier of people with Parkinson's could allow greater accumulation of environmental toxins in the brain. If researchers are able to quantify these changes, they may be able to identify people with the disease early and to track disease" progression, as well as to enable the targeted development of therapies that may restore normal blood-brain barrier function.

CLINICAL DISCOVERY PROGRAM GRANT RECIPIENTS

Nicolaas I. Bohnen, MD, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
Executive, ADL and Cholinergic Functions in PD

Piu Chan, MD, PhD
Xuanwu Hospital of Capital University of Medical Sciences
A Randomized, Double-blind and Placebo-control Study to Assess the Ability of Slowing Disease Progression and Safety and Tolerability of Green Tea Polyphenols in Patients with Early Parkinson's Disease

K.L. Leenders, MD, PhD
University Medical Centre Groningen
P-glycoprotein Dysfunction of the Blood-brain Barrier in Parkinson's Disease

Christine Sapienza, PhD
University of Florida
Strength Training Patients with Parkinson's Disease for Dysphagia

MJFF CHANGES NEWSLETTER POLICY

In response to an overwhelming interest in our work, The Michael J. Fox Foundation has increased the frequency of its newsletter to three times per year. However, in an effort to keep our costs down and maintain our commitment to direct as much funding as possible to research, we will mail only to those who have donated $25 or more within 12 months of the newsletter mailing period. As always, a PDF version of our newsletter will be posted on our Web site for everyone, donors and nondonors alike, in order to keep you posted on all of our work and the latest in Parkinson's research.

This policy commenced with the first newsletter mailed in 2005. However, we have decided to mail out one newsletter per year to our entire donor base. We will continue with the new policy as of the next mailing.

We are confident that with your help and the hard work of scientists, Parkinson's will become a thing of the past.

THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH IS DEDICATED TO ACCELERATING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CURE FOR PARKINSON'S DISEASE THROUGH AN AGGRESSIVELY FUNDED RESEARCH AGENDA.

For questions or comments regarding the MJFF newsletter or Web site, please contact editor Holly Barkhymer at hbarkhymer@michaeljfox.org