Dear friends,

While the WPC 2022 is two years away, the program committee is already working hard to design an incredible program with scientific highlights, advances in research, wrapped in messages of hope for where we are going as a community. While we don't know yet what the next two years will look like, regarding pandemic and travel, we are planning as if it's moving forward! We know how special the WPC experience is and fully intend to offer the best possible WPC experience in 2022.

In the meantime, good things are happening now! WPC is holding a virtual panel discussion this week for care partners and family members to learn about Mental Health and Parkinson's and the role the care partner can play. Learn more below and register today.

WPC is launching a new virtual program this month, "WPC Partner
Highlights", where we'll highlight a Coalition partner and their work in the Parkinson's space. The kind of work that moves the needle on research, treatments, advocacy and more. This month, we welcome Parkinson's Canada to tell us about an exciting initiative they are helping to launch called the Canadian Open Parkinson Network (C-OPN). C-OPN will accelerate Parkinson's research and while it will serve the country of Canada, the global Parkinson's community will all benefit from what is learned. Learn more below and register today for the July 30 discussion.

Looking forward to seeing you Barcelona in June 2022.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth "Eli" Pollard
Executive Director

WPC Blog Highlight

Using Stem Cells to Understand Parkinson's Disease

One of the greatest challenges in understanding Parkinson’s disease (PD) is how little we know about the origins and development of the condition. Our studies of postmortem tissue are like examining the result of a car crash and attempting to deduce what precipitated the accident and how it occurred. We only get to directly observe the end result of PD since acquiring live biopsies from human patients during the course of the disease is impossible.

One solution to this dilemma is to study PD using stem cell technology. For our research, published in January in Nature Medicine, we generated special stem cells, known as induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs), from cells of patients with young-onset PD. This process involved taking adult blood cells "back in time" to an embryonic state.
Our team used the iPSCs to produce dopamine neurons from each patient and then cultured them in a dish and analyzed the neurons' functions. These neurons were genetically identical to the patients' own neurons. We compared these neurons to those of a control group of individuals without young-onset PD.

I was co-first author of this study, along with project scientist Samuel Sances, PhD, and project scientist Nur Yucer, PhD, both from Cedars-Sinai. The senior author was Clive Svendsen, PhD, director of the Cedars-Sinai Board of Governors Regenerative Medicine Institute.

Among our findings:
Elevated levels of alpha synuclein in the cells of 11 of the 12 patients in the study. This protein occurs in most forms of PD. Importantly, none of the 10 control lines showed a similar elevation of alpha synuclein. This finding suggests that defects in alpha synuclein handling could be a common feature in PD and highlights therapies that target reducing alpha synuclein levels as having the potential to modify the disease...
Join this virtual discussion to learn the facts about mental health and Parkinson's, hear some tips and tricks for managing mental health issues, and hear from a couple living with Parkinson's about how they manage the mental health aspects day to day.

Moderated by Julie Carter, RN, MN, ANP, Professor Emerita, Oregon Health & Science University, this panel will have the following experts panelists:

Gregory Pontone, MD, MHS, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Allison Marie Allen, MSW, LCSW, Duke University Medical Center
Karen Sauer and Fred Winston

Did you miss our first Care Partner Panel on the role of the Care Partner in Medication Management? Watch the archive today

Register

WPC for YOPD Fundraiser - #WPC4YOPD

In January, the WPC launched a PwP designed and PwP led fundraiser to raise money for travel grants for people with Young Onset Parkinson's to attend the 6th World Parkinson Congress.

When COVID-19 hit, we put the initiative on pause while the world focused on the pandemic. We relaunched in late June and now welcome our next two fundraisers, Rune from Norway and Nathan from Canada. Read about Rune and Nathan and ALL the YOPD advocates who are working to support others to get to Barcelona as part of the #WPC4YOPD campaign.

You can this initiative by giving on Facebook, or directly through the WPC
website. Even with the "pandemic pause", we have already raised over $12,000 towards our goal of $50,000. Every penny counts and we know many of the global advocates who got their start at the WPC, so your financial support will come back to the community many times over once new advocates are inspired to get involved.

**Name:** Rune Vethe  
**Country:** Norway  
**Fundraiser Dates:** July 07 - July 21

Rune Vethe served as an Ambassador for the 5th World Parkinson Congress. He was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2009 and has channeled his professional skills in teaching and physical education into being a Rock Steady Boxing Coach and Parkinson's advocate in Norway.

**Name:** Nathan Langille  
**Country:** Canada  
**Fundraiser Dates:** July 22 - August 4

Nathan Langille was diagnosed with YOPD at the age of 38 but had symptoms (tremors) since the age of 16. He has yet to attend a WPC but hopes to attend in 2022. He lives in Barrie, Ontario and is an active fundraiser in his country for Parkinson causes. WPC is excited to welcome Nathan to the global stage.

**WPC Partner Highlight - Parkinson Canada**

Join the WPC and Coalition partner, Parkinson Canada on Thursday, July 30 at 4PM ET/ 1PM PT to hear about the Canadian Open Parkinson Network (C-OPN), a new and innovative network being launched in partnership with Brain Canada across Canada.

C-OPN will create an innovative national platform to bridge people, data, and resources to accelerate Parkinson’s research and discoveries.
Learn all about the C-OPN on this live panel discussion featuring immediate past WPC President, WPC Board member and C-OPN PI, Dr. A. Jon Stoessl along with C-OPN co-Directors, Dr. Oury Monchi and Dr. Edward (Ted) Fon. Webinar will be moderated by Karen Lee, PhD, CEO of Parkinson Canada.

REGISTER to join this virtual panel.

WPC 2022 Photo Campaign

Are you planning to attend the 6th World Parkinson Congress in Barcelona, in June 2022? Submit a photo letting the Parkinson's world know you will be in Spain with us! Be creative and we may post your photo here next month!

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