Dear friends,

Happy to see June rolling in and to be hearing about countries slowly and cautiously opening up allowing people to start resuming their lives post COVID-19. With that positive news, comes the heavier topic of what's happening in the US and around the world with people rising up to address injustices experienced by our family members, friends, and neighbors who are people of color.

While the intersection of the Parkinson's community and race and ethnicity is not often at the top of the list for conversations, it is important to recognize that the intersectionality of health, access to health care, clinical research, and race and ethnicity matter not just to marginalized communities, but to all of us. If anyone with Parkinson's is not getting good care or does not have a seat at the table, we all suffer because of it.

Sadly, the US and other countries have some dark parts of history where people of color received dangerous, corrupt, and substandard care in the
supposed advancement of science. It's important to understand how systemic racism impacts the care our Black and Brown friends receive when diagnosed with Parkinson's or any other health issue.

On a simpler level, race, ethnicity, gender and even age can impact a body's response to medical treatments, which means clinical trials for Parkinson's that have predominantly middle aged white male participants won't necessarily result in the same outcomes for others. We could use this as a launching pad to take a deeper dive on research and health outcomes as they relate to race and ethnicity. We would all benefit from a discussion on this relevant topic.

While we at the WPC don't have answers, we support this conversation and encourage our amazing community to join in some of the more challenging and difficult discussions to learn and understand where our 'blind' spots are in the Parkinson's space. How can WE do better?

We stand behind the fight for equality and respect, and recognize that there is work to be done to ensure whatever progress is made during this time is carried forward responsibly.

On a lighter note, we do have some amazing new WPC blog posts highlighted below to keep you inspired and hopeful on the direction of Parkinson's science today. These highlights are particularly wonderful because they are all written by junior researchers and clinicians, the future of our community. Let's support them and their work!

Registration is now open for the next Care Partner Virtual Panel which will discuss the Role of the Care Partner in Mental Health on Thursday, July 9 at 3PM EDT. Register for this virtual series today.

Stay safe and stay connected. We look forward to seeing you online and eventually in person in Barcelona in June 2022.

Kind regards,
Elizabeth "Eli" Pollard  
Executive Director

WPC Blog Highlights

**Beyond Dopamine: The Role of Glutamate in Parkinson's Disease**  
by Naila Kulmann, Canada

**Are Neuropsychiatric Symptoms an Early Sign of Parkinson's Disease**  
by Alexandru Hanganu, Canada

**Using Stem Cells to Understand Parkinson's Disease**  
by Alexander Laperle, USA

WPC 2020 Care Partner Virtual Panel Series

On April 28th, we held our first Care Partner Virtual Panel on the role of the *Care Partner in Medication Management*. More than 500 people joined the live session from around the globe. **Watch the archive today**

SAVE THE DATE and REGISTER for the next virtual panel  
*Role of the Care Partner in Mental Health and Parkinson's*  
Thursday, July 9 at 3 PM ET (US).

Register
In January, the WPC launched its first ever totally PwP designed and PwP led fundraiser to raise money to support travel grants for YOPD to attend the 6th World Parkinson Congress.

In March, when COVID-19 hit, we put the initiative on pause while the world focused on the pandemic. We are now gearing up to relaunch in late June with advocate Julie Fitzgerald first up. Learn more about Julie below and read about ALL the YOPD advocates who are working to support others to get to Barcelona in 2022.

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

Julie Fitzgerald (USA)
Like many others, it took years before a movement disorder specialist diagnosed me with YOPD in 2013. I spent 10 frustrating years wondering and searching for the answer to “What is wrong with me?” If only I had those precious years back, treatment could’ve started earlier. After all, early intervention is crucial.

Once I stopped feeling sorry for myself...which took nearly a year, I fought back with a passion. I wanted to contribute more to our community, so I became an advocate and now work with many Parkinson's organizations in the U.S., where I live.

My mission is to help others not only learn to live with Parkinson’s but to
thrive. I have signed up to help with the #WPC4YOPD campaign to support others with YOPD to attend the WPC. The WPC is where many YOPD first find their footing as advocates, so I want to do my part in helping to get a newly diagnosed YOPD to Barcelona!

Where is Parky?

Parky is hiding out this month in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, raising awareness and snuggling with cute babies.

Send us your pictures of Parky. One hundred percent of all profits from Parky the Raccoon sales go to the WPC Travel Grants fund to get people with PD, and junior clinicians and researchers to the WPC.

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