



Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation Update

Research Grants Update

With COVID continuing its impact on the daily lives of family, friends, and ourselves, diabetes continues to also impact many daily lives and it is not letting up! Since COVID began, the prevalence of diabetes cases (both Type 1 and 2) has increased for many reasons. Diabetes is considered an underlying health condition. That means if someone with diabetes gets COVID, the illness may be more harmful than to people who do not have diabetes. That's why it's critical for Lions to continue to battle diabetes in any way we can, and recent donations to the University of Minnesota (U of MN) for diabetes research are so very important.

Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with diabetes, and to supporting research devoted to preventing, developing treatments for and curing diabetes. Our recent donations to research support that mission, and they are possible thanks to all our generous clubs who work hard every day to raise funds and share with us. ***Thank you for your donations!***

MLDF recently approved five \$50,000 donations (for a total of \$250,000) for research at the University of Minnesota. Those donations were designated for the following five projects:

- 1. Hiring of a consultant to help obtain Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of human-to-human islet transplants to cure Type 1 diabetes.** The research indicates this procedure works and is safe – it just needs FDA approval to make it more available more people.
- 2. Curing diabetes by stopping the immune system.** The immune system is instrumental in causing Type 1 diabetes and this research attempts to reverse that impact.
- 3. Development of a next generation drug to fight Type 2 diabetes.** This research is seeking to develop a new Type 2 diabetes medication.
- 4. Production of genetically-altered pigs as donors of organs for the treatment of diabetes and related complications.** Pigs are being raised in a sterile environment so that organs from those pigs can be studied for transplant to humans.
- 5. Bringing immune tolerance to the clinic for people with diabetes and kidney failure.** Anti-rejection (or immunosuppression) medications are currently needed for transplants to humans – this research seeks to eliminate transplant medications.

Lions Support Led Research to Clinical Trails

One research area no longer being supported by the MLDF is the development of a desktop MRI machine to support an implantable bio-artificial pancreas. This research is complete and clinical trials will begin soon! This project has been supported by the MLDF for years – it's nearing completion!

MLDF Stewardship

Donations to MLDF are being used appropriately, as approximately \$0.95 of every \$1 is designated for research. In addition, the U of MN is known as one of the top (*possibly the top*) academic research institutions for diabetes in the world.

MLDF STRIDES for Diabetes Awareness “virtual” fundraiser

Please see the flyer about MLDF's STRIDES for Diabetes Awareness virtual fundraiser event in this *Informer* issue. This is an exciting opportunity to support MLDF's mission by walking, cycling, curling, rolling, swimming, skiing, snowshoeing, etc.! Physical activity is key to preventing diabetes and improving health. With that in mind, our virtual fundraiser is encouraging measurable physical activity of 15 miles a month beginning February 1. (2,000 miles = 1 mile).

Club Visits

Please reach out to either of your Trustees to schedule your club visit. Whether your club is meeting in person, or virtually, we are available to visit!

Catch the MLDF dream...a life without diabetes...by learning about and sharing information about diabetes.