

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RESEARCHERS LIKE DR. DENG

THANKS TO YOU, HAN-XIANG DENG, MD, PH.D OF NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY RECEIVED CRITICAL FUNDING FROM APDA TO CARRY OUT HIS STUDY.



Over the past year, APDA has funded critical Parkinson's research — all thanks to generous supporters like you!

The main focus of APDA's research program is to fund the best scientists with the brightest ideas to help solve the mystery of Parkinson's disease. Because of you, we've been able to award grants to young researchers and launch the careers of many promising scientists dedicated to the future of PD research.

Han-Xiang Deng, MD., PhD is a perfect example of this. Back in 1998, Dr. Deng applied for an APDA grant and was awarded \$25,000 to carry out his study. Dr. Deng conducted research with the team at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

"I'm very optimistic about the future of Parkinson's disease research."

—Han-Xiang Deng, MD, PhD

After 18 years, they discovered a new cause of Parkinson's disease — mutations in a gene called TMEM230.

The study's findings, which were published in an online journal called Nature Genetics, provide new clues to explain how Parkinson's disease develops in the brain. Those clues may inform future therapies for the disease.

"I am extremely grateful for APDA's initial funding because it was the key foundation to initiate the study that led to finding TMEM230," says Dr. Deng.

This is the incredible impact you have! In 2016, funding was also awarded to support three Post-Doctoral Fellowships, seven Research Grants to junior investigators, eight APDA Centers of Advanced Research, and 12 Summer Student Fellowships.

Browse all APDA-funded investigators by visiting apdaparkinson.org/apdafundedresearch

apda

What's happening at

2017 Optimism Walks: Join us for one of 15 events happening across the country from April through October including a brand new Walk in Southern California! For cities and dates, visit apdaparkinson.org/optimism-walks.



Join us for a webinar: We invite you to participate in our webinar *Spotlight on Addressing Motor and Non-Motor Symptoms – The Changing Landscape* on March 8. This webinar is sponsored by Joan and Ross Collard and AbbVie. Also join us for *Spotlight on Motor Fluctuations* with Dr. Lisa Shulman from the University of Maryland on May 11. This webinar is sponsored by Sunovion. You can also check out all of our past webinars at apdaparkinson.org/webinar.

Call for grant applications: APDA works hard to fund the best and brightest in the world of PD research. Applications are currently being accepted for research grants, including the coveted George C. Cotzias Fellowship which awards \$240,000 over three years to one deserving recipient, as well as research grants, post-doctoral awards and summer fellowships. The deadline is March 11, 2017. For more information, please visit apdaparkinson.org/grants.

What has four wheels and can help people with PD? Now you can easily donate your car, truck, van, RV, motorcycle, boat, ATV or any vehicle to APDA! The process is fast and hassle-free from the simple online donation form to free towing scheduled at your convenience. A tax receipt provides the maximum tax deduction and is mailed to you about a week after pick-up. Learn more at apda.causereform.com.

MORE THAN 55 YEARS AFTER APDA'S FOUNDING, WE ARE THRILLED TO LAUNCH OUR NEW BRAND.

The American Parkinson Disease Association (APDA) has unveiled a new brand strategy that aims to increase the public's awareness of Parkinson's disease as a major health issue, and reaffirm APDA's role as a leader in the Parkinson's disease (PD) advocacy arena. Through this new brand strategy and framework, APDA commemorates its 55+ year legacy and the distinct role it has played in serving the PD community, while simultaneously addressing the urgent, unmet needs for the more than 1 million individuals living with PD today.

APDA's reimagined brand begins with a fresh, relevant mission statement that speaks to the core of its purpose of ensuring improved quality of life for those facing PD as well as unraveling the scientific mysteries of this disease through outstanding science:

Every day, we provide the support, education, and research that will help everyone impacted by Parkinson's disease live life to the fullest.

To further illustrate the urgency of APDA's work, a new logo and tagline were designed to reflect APDA's dual mission to serve those impacted by Parkinson's disease and support innovative research to uncover the causes, treatment and a cure for this disease.



Coming soon: APDA's brand will be launched online at apdaparkinson.org, along with our new and improved social channels.

This ambitious branding project was launched in 2015, when APDA retained the expertise of Big Duck, a Brooklyn-based communications firm that works exclusively with nonprofits to address communications challenges and transform brands to increase public visibility. The objective was to allow people to easily identify with the newly defined brand and at the same time inspire people to become involved with APDA's work.

APDA has already begun incorporating the new brand into its work, with a wide-spread official launch, featuring a complete website redesign, in February 2017. A full transition across its nationwide network is expected to be complete by the December 2017.



A message from
President and CEO,
Leslie A. Chambers

Dear Friend,

Happy New Year! As we embark on a new year filled with optimism and hope we have so much to look forward to. You may have noticed that this edition of *APDA Insights* looks a little different. We are pleased to share exciting news about the launch of our new APDA strategy. You are among the very first to see this new brand that will reaffirm APDA's position as a leader in providing support to the Parkinson's community and to set the stage for future growth.

I am so proud of our tremendous heritage and history. As we look to the future of APDA with a focus on how to best serve our constituents and expand our reach, we felt it was important to take a fresh look at how our organization is positioned to the public and make sure we are clearly representing all that we have to offer.

Throughout the year-long rebranding effort that kicked off in 2015, we consulted people living with PD, care partners, donors, volunteers, staff, healthcare and medical professionals, researchers, and many more to ensure APDA's re-imagined brand would resonate with our most important audiences.

We trust our valued supporters who have known APDA for many years will be invigorated by our new look and feel. APDA continues to be the strong organization that you have always relied on and we remain steadfast in our mission. For those who are new to APDA, our new branding better reflects who we are, what we do, and our optimistic outlook for the future.

We are very excited about this next phase in our history. We could not be more grateful to all those who make our work possible and I wanted to take this moment to let you know how deeply your support is valued and appreciated.

Sincerely,

Leslie A. Chambers
President and CEO
American Parkinson Disease Association

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American Parkinson Disease Association is exempt from federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

OLIVIA'S STORY:

Finding hope through local young onset support groups

Olivia was so young when her symptoms began that she never attributed them to anything serious. It started with weakness in her hands and poor dexterity, then progressed to muscle tension and spasms. Her grandmother, who had Parkinson's disease herself, pointed out to Olivia that she had a tremor. Then, at only 24 years old, Olivia was diagnosed with young onset Parkinson's disease.



At first, it all seemed so surreal. She imagined how painful it would be for her parents to learn that she had Parkinson's disease, and wondered how it might affect other parts of her life.

Shortly after her diagnosis, Olivia moved out of her home state for a new job. "I didn't know anyone in the area, let alone anyone with Parkinson's. I had never even heard of someone my age having it," she says. That's when she looked for comfort and support, which she found through the APDA community:

“ The information on APDA's website has helped tremendously, especially for support after I was diagnosed. Through their resources, I found a local young onset support group, which has been very helpful in learning to cope with and understand the disease! ”

– Olivia

It is so fortunate that Olivia was able to access APDA's resources and connect with people who understood exactly what she was going through. This can be so critical for people facing young onset Parkinson's disease, who might otherwise feel alone in the challenges ahead.

Olivia appreciates the support APDA has provided throughout her journey. We thank donors like you for helping us offer the essential resources and support programs that made a difference for Olivia, and for others with young onset Parkinson's disease.

To learn more about APDA's National Young Onset Resources, please visit apdaparkinson.org/YoungOnset

DANCE THROUGH PARKINSON'S

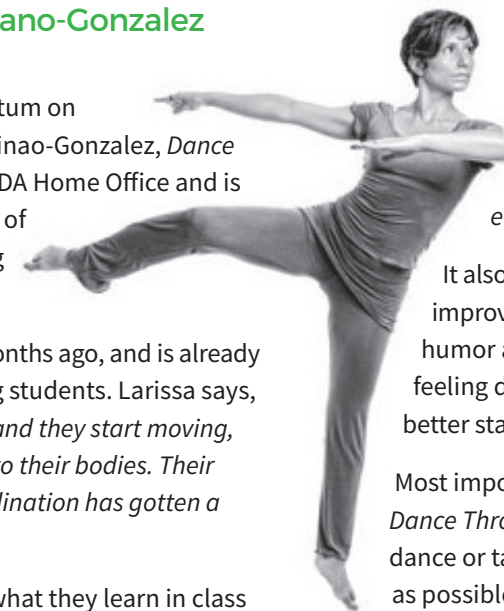
with instructor Larissa Schiano-Gonzalez

A new dance class is gaining momentum on Staten Island, NY! Led by Larissa Schiano-Gonzalez, *Dance Through Parkinson's* is held at the APDA Home Office and is designed to help ease the symptoms of Parkinson's disease while connecting people through movement.

The weekly class started just a few months ago, and is already making a difference for the attending students. Larissa says, "I notice that when the music begins and they start moving, there is a sense of ease that comes into their bodies. Their mobility, balance and hand-eye coordination has gotten a bit better."

The students find that they can use what they learn in class to go about other daily tasks with graceful control over their motions. Some students will even do a simple dance step as they wash the dishes, since the familiar movement makes them less prone to shaking or falling!

But *Dance Through Parkinson's* does so much more than this



— it helps students on a deep emotional level. "The dance class is very helpful because it keeps me moving and motivated. I look forward to the class every Wednesday," says Bill, one of Larissa's students.

It also provides a space for students to have some fun! With improvisational exercises, the class becomes energized by humor and self-expression. Even if students enter the class feeling down, the lighthearted practice leaves them in a better state of mind and body.

Most importantly, this is not a class that focuses on limitations. *Dance Through Parkinson's* is like any other beginner modern dance or tap class, only modified to serve the students as fully as possible. It's a place to be open and connected to others, and to leave limitations behind.

Dance Through Parkinson's — and other exercise programs — are improving symptoms for people with Parkinson's disease across the country. Your support of APDA helps fund classes like these, which inspire participants to live life to the fullest.



APDA hosts Dance through Parkinson's, a class instructed by Larissa Schiano-Gonzalez (pictured dancing in the center).

“ I truly believe that this program is changing the lives of our students by giving them the tools to move throughout their day with ease and grace. Their overall morale is getting lifted. It's teaching our students that they can do things they never thought they could do. ”

– Larissa

NEW STUDY LINKS GUT BACTERIA TO PARKINSON'S DISEASE

Could the bacteria in your gut be a link to Parkinson's disease?

Last month, researchers at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) discovered a link between intestinal bacteria and Parkinson's disease. The study, coauthored by APDA Scientific Advisory Board member Dr. Marie-Francoise Chesselet, was conducted on mice — and if replicated in humans — it may explain more about what causes Parkinson's disease.

The findings suggest that targeting the gut microbe may provide a new approach for diagnosing and treating Parkinson's disease.

Dr. Marie Saint-Hilaire, a neurology professor at Boston University Medical Campus, said other studies suggest Parkinson's disease can start in the gut. Saint-Hilaire is a member of the APDA Scientific Advisory Board.

"Constipation is one of the nonmotor signs of PD which can start years before the motor signs," says Saint-Hilarie. "We do use probiotics for treatment of constipation in PD. It [constipation] can be distressing to patients and is one of the nonmotor symptoms that gets discussed commonly during visits."

Saint-Hilaire says animal findings must be replicated in humans to confirm the link, so more studies need to be done.

