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 March 11. This webinar is sponsored by Sunovian. 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.causefertilitywork.com.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING RESEARCHERS LIKE DR. DENG

Thank you for supporting researchers like Dr. Deng. 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.

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.

AMERICAN PARKINSON DISEASE ASSOCIATION

Strength in optimism. Hope in progress.

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 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 the fullest. Parkinson's disease live life to the fullest.

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.

For more information, visit our website at www.apdaparkinson.org, or call (800) 223-2732. To make a donation online, visit www.apdaparkinson.org/WinterInsights2017.

Strength in optimism. Hope in progress.

INSIGHTS

FOLDS HERE

Winter 2017 Newsletter

WE ARE THRILLED TO LAUNCH OUR NEW BRAND.
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.

“This 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. She wants 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. The class is held every Wednesday at 1pm and is designed to help ease the symptoms of Parkinson’s disease while connecting people through movement. 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 to the fullest.

“...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.

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 Françoise 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 microbiome 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.

NEW STUDY LINKS GUT BACTERIA TO PARKINSON’S DISEASE

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“Constipation is one of the nonmotor signs of PD which can start years before the motor signs,” says Saint-Hilaire. “We do use probiotics for treatment of constipation in PD. (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.