



Your Voice. Your News.

FALL 2020

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF PARKINSON'S FOUNDATION

A Physically Distant (but Closely Connected) Parkinson's Community

PD Health @ Home offers support during COVID-19 pandemic

People with Parkinson's disease (PD) over the age of 60 are more at risk for complications associated with COVID-19 like pneumonia and increased recovery time. That's why, when the pandemic hit, we got to work right away, creating a virtual educational and wellness program to help keep our community healthy and connected.

With the help of our generous supporters, the Parkinson's Foundation launched **PD Health @ Home** this April. These weekly virtual events, created for the Parkinson's community, offer health and wellness programs like **Mindfulness Mondays** — which invites participants to join a short mindfulness practice, **Wellness Wednesdays** — a 60-minute webinar related to a varying monthly theme and **Fitness Fridays** — a health-focused workout class to help people with PD stay fit. These offerings are crafted with the aim of enhancing and educating the Parkinson's community while increasing opportunities for social engagement.

In its first seven weeks, more than 115,000 people, from all 50 states and more than 20 countries worldwide participated remotely in **PD Health @ Home**. Participants have made it clear that the program is making a difference.

"It's comforting to know that the Parkinson's Foundation is here to answer our questions about how COVID-19 can affect people with PD. The Foundation has also been a critical source of information about exercise, medications, support groups, research and telemedicine during this



"The PD community relies on us for the most up-to-date information, and our new online programming provides specific tools and resources needed to live better with Parkinson's while social distancing."

— John L. Lehr, President & CEO

pandemic," said Denise Coley, who lives with PD and is a member of the Parkinson's Foundation's People with Parkinson's Council (formerly PPAC).

With such a positive response to this program, and with the ongoing need to provide for our community, the Parkinson's Foundation plans to continue offering **PD Health @ Home** throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. New participants are always welcome, so please check it out!

For more information or to register for an event, please visit [Parkinson.org/PDHealth](https://www.parkinson.org/PDHealth). 

BE A PARKINSON'S HERO!

Parkinson's Heroes are a generous group of donors who provide reliable monthly gifts to support the fight against Parkinson's.

Giving monthly by credit card is easy and effective. It gives us the steady stream of funding we need to put new programs into place and respond to urgent moments like COVID-19.

Please join this special group today by making a monthly pledge! You will make a heroic difference in the lives of those affected by the disease.

Be a Parkinson's Hero!
Sign up at
Parkinson.org/Hero
or return the enclosed
reply form.

A Time of Flexibility and Innovation Grant Recipient Pivots During Pandemic



Since 2011, Invertigo Dance Theatre in Los Angeles, CA, has offered *Dancing*

Through Parkinson's, a program that provides positive and nonjudgmental dance classes to approximately 100 people at varying stages of Parkinson's disease progression, along with their care partners and family members.

When studios began shutting down due to COVID-19, staff at the Theatre knew they needed to find a way to continue offering this unique, popular and bilingual (English and Spanish) program. Harnessing their grant funding from the Parkinson's Foundation, Invertigo Dance Theatre worked with its Teaching Artists staff to develop a new online program that allowed dancers to attend classes at home.

Classes are active and include music and dance with seated

and standing choreography. Dancers enjoy being part of a supportive PD community while reaping the benefits of exercise, which helps manage some symptoms of PD.

"I have very few tremors," said Jeannie, a dance participant. "My posture is relatively erect, my mind is still sharp, I feel confident being in public. Yes, I have challenges, but because of *Dancing Through Parkinson's*, I know that I can overcome them and deal with them if I keep moving and dancing."

Invertigo Dance Theatre is one of more than 100 Parkinson's Foundation community grant recipients that promote connection, community, physical movement, mental clarity and joy during this time of disruption.

For more information on how we are furthering health and wellness across the nation, visit Parkinson.org/GranteeStories.

Investing in Junior Researchers to Advance Parkinson's Care and Treatment



For more than 60 years, the Parkinson's Foundation has supported research initiatives that have revolutionized the field. One of the paths to progress has been funding the research

of junior faculty. The goal is to keep emerging researchers active in the pursuit of better Parkinson's treatment and care through the Stanley Fahn Junior Faculty Awards.

This year, of the 57 scientists who applied to receive this prestigious grant, Jan Hendrik Reimann, PhD and Ian Martin, PhD were selected. Their work epitomizes the kind of innovative, scientific approach that is critical to better understanding Parkinson's so that we can make breakthroughs toward treatments and, ultimately, a cure for PD.

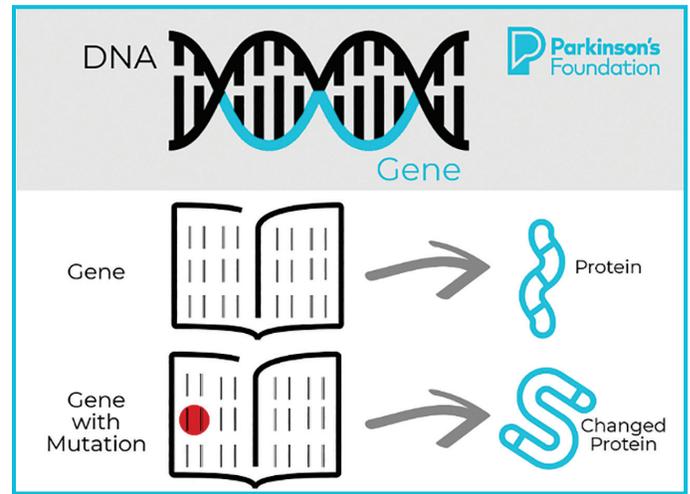
Jan Hendrik Reimann, PhD, University of Delaware *Balance, Walking and Falls*

Studies have shown that the motor-related Parkinson's challenges cause around 60% of people with PD to fall, and 40% to fall repeatedly. Because of these risks, many people with Parkinson's reduce physical activity, negatively impacting disease progression and their overall quality of life.

Due to its prevalence, Jan Hendrik Reimann became interested in understanding the root causes of balance and walking challenges for people with Parkinson's. Specifically, Hendrick Reimann is investigating the role of sensory deficits in walking, hypothesizing that people with PD experience impaired sensory activity that prevents them from stabilizing against a fall. Utilizing virtual reality, research subjects receive visual cues that induce the sensation of a fall, while Hendrick Reimann's research team studies ankle joint stabilization, and works to restore sensory function through vibratory stimuli.

This practical, yet cutting-edge research, could help prevent dangerous and frightening falls for people with PD.

Ian Martin, PhD, Oregon Health & Science University *Genetic Mutations and Age-Related Dysfunction*



To deepen our understanding of how certain genetic mutations relate to the development of Parkinson's, Ian Martin began a study of disease-causing mutations in the LRRK2 gene. The goal was to try to isolate which genes might provide insight into the age-dependent functions and dysfunctions of dopamine neurons. His research identified three genes that have a role in building neurites, which send signals to neurons in a different location of the brain. With the help of the Parkinson's Foundation, Martin will be expanding his research and testing to learn more about how these LRRK2 mutations are linked to Parkinson's.

Through the Stanley Fahn Junior Faculty Award and other research grants, the Parkinson's Foundation is actively supporting work to better understand PD and spearhead new advances.

To learn more about ongoing research, visit
[Parkinson.org/ResearchWeFund](https://www.parkinson.org/ResearchWeFund).

We Moved Moving Day Online — And It Was Fantastic!

The Parkinson's Foundation's signature fundraising event, Moving Day, has gathered more than 130,000 annual participants nationwide and raised more than \$27 million for cutting-edge PD research since 2011, improving care and providing resources for the nearly one million Americans living with Parkinson's.

Moving Day is so important to our Parkinson's community and to the thousands of individuals who pledge to walk in honor of someone they love, or to deepen their commitment to ending Parkinson's. We found it necessary to cancel in-person Moving Day spring events due to the COVID-19 pandemic to prioritize the health and safety of our community.

Looking for a way to keep our community engaged and not lose the opportunity to unite, we quickly transitioned Moving Day into a virtual event — and the response was phenomenal!

On May 9, at 1 p.m. ET, thousands of participants from all over the country and the world joined together virtually for a special online workout that kept us all moving. There were inspiring testimonials and personal stories that perfectly demonstrated the strength and diversity of our PD community. In total, our virtual Moving Day event received more than 10,000 views and raised \$1.4 million for the fight against PD!

We are incredibly grateful for the outpouring of support we received. To all who participated, and to all who supported this effort, thank you for your commitment to celebrating movement and fighting Parkinson's disease together and we hope you can join us for a fall virtual event!

If you didn't get a chance to participate, it's not too late! Visit [MovingDay.org](https://www.parkinson.org/movingday) to register for a fall virtual event. 



"The Parkinson's Foundation did an incredible job personalizing Virtual Moving Day with so many inspirational human stories and creative workouts from around the country. I was blown away with the Foundation's ability to tie in so many key aspects of Moving Day, such as the importance and impact of each team."

— Melissa Tafoya,
Rock Steady Boxing
coach and Moving Day
Sacramento team captain

CONTRIBUTION FORM

YES! I want to help build the next generation of Parkinson's caregivers, researchers and advocates! Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to support the innovative work of the Parkinson's Foundation so people with Parkinson's can live the best lives possible:

\$35 \$75 \$150 \$500 Other \$ _____

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