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SUMMER 2026

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF PARKINSON'S FOUNDATION

Parkinson's Foundation Invests Additional $5 Million in Funding for PD Research

The Parkinson's Foundation has recently committed an additional $5 million in funding for Parkinson's disease (PD) research — thanks to generous friends like you. Because of your support, we're determined to make life better for people with PD and advance research toward a cure.

- We are investing **in additional Impact Awards.** We are establishing two subprograms and doubling the number of awards to support innovative foundational and translational PD research. And, we created new Momentum Awards, which will help standout researchers continue their work from recently completed Parkinson's Foundation awards.
- **We continue to invest in drug discovery and development.** Through our partnership with Parkinson's UK, we evaluate dozens of new drugs and directly invest in medications that either address symptoms or aim to slow, stop or prevent PD altogether.
- **We're also creating the Environmental Trigger Awards.** These grants will explore ways to prevent PD by looking at how herbicides like paraquat and other environmental toxins affect brain cells. Researchers can then better understand how the disease develops, which may enable earlier treatment and prevent or slow disease progression. Plus, their studies will inform policies that reduce harmful environmental exposures at the state and federal level.
- **Finally, we are expanding our Launch Awards, Postdoctoral Fellowships and Trailblazer Awards.** Taking on a disease as complex as PD requires the best scientific minds in the world, and we need significant funding to keep them focused on Parkinson's. Supporting innovative ideas from early-career scientists through these awards will help ensure there is a robust pipeline of researchers focused on better understanding, and curing, Parkinson's disease.

We've come so far in researching new PD therapies and finding a cure. Now, with $5 million in additional funding made possible by your support, we can make even greater strides in the fight against PD.

To learn more about our research efforts, visit Parkinson.org/Research

The Future of Parkinson's Policy

With your support and the passion of the entire Parkinson's disease (PD) community, the Parkinson's Foundation has built a dedicated policy department for the first time. We are championing policy changes at the federal and state levels to make life better for people with PD and change the trajectory of PD in the future.

Leading this department is Andi Lipstein Fristedt, Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer. Andi brings nearly 20 years of leadership experience to the Foundation, including roles at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration and on Capitol Hill.

The Foundation's key policy priorities are to:

Implement the National Parkinson's Project. This is the first federal initiative that specifically supports PD research, prevention and care. We're working to build momentum as the government moves forward to implement this project — so it can deliver real results for people with PD.

Increase government funding for PD research. Parkinson's is the fastest-growing neurodegenerative disease. Yet funding has not kept pace. We want to accelerate state and federal investment in Parkinson's research. This includes advocating for $600 million annually in research funding from the National Institutes of Health.

Over 300 advocates gathered in Washington, D.C. for the 2026 Parkinson's Policy Forum on Capitol Hill.

"These are challenging times in policy circles. But there's a real opportunity to reimagine what's possible when it comes to improving Parkinson's care and research through policy."

— Andi Lipstein Fristedt, Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy and Policy Officer

Connect people with care. Access to care has not kept up with the rise in PD. We're focusing on policies that improve the quality of life now for people with Parkinson's and their care partners. We are transforming care in the future so everyone who's diagnosed can access timely, quality and affordable care wherever they live.

Prevent Parkinson's by addressing environmental health threats. Environmental factors like the herbicide paraquat have been tied to Parkinson's disease. Paraquat is banned in over 70 countries, but it's still sold in the U.S. We can change that by working with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remove paraquat from the market and encouraging state governments to end its use.

Expand education. Knowledge is power. We must educate more people with PD so they can make informed decisions about their health. Policy changes can also increase access to specialized training for providers. That way, they can make accurate early diagnoses and develop personalized treatment plans.

Learn more about our policy efforts at Parkinson.org/Policy

Meet the Researcher: Aiming to Improve Early Detection and Diagnosis

"Earlier intervention may allow for treatments that preserve neurons — slowing, if not preventing, progression."

— Jacob Simmering, PhD

Parkinson's disease (PD) can be difficult for clinicians to diagnose, especially in its early stages. Some people with PD may get diagnosed only when the symptoms are more obvious. Others may never get a formal diagnosis.

Jacob Simmering, PhD, is a recipient of a Parkinson's Foundation 2025 Stanley Fahn Junior Faculty Award. In his lab at the University of Iowa, a Parkinson's Foundation Center of Excellence, Dr. Simmering is aiming to improve early detection and diagnosis of PD.

He's collecting healthcare data from nearly 250,000 people recently diagnosed with PD. His goal is to spot patterns that commonly precede the disease. He hopes to identify a "diagnostic window." This is a stretch of time when a patient repeatedly visits their doctor for PD-like symptoms.

Dr. Simmering will look at these individuals to learn what prevented physicians from diagnosing PD sooner. He hypothesizes that the three biggest factors delaying a diagnosis are:

- PD's unique symptom patterns
- Living in more rural areas
- Not being seen by a neurologist

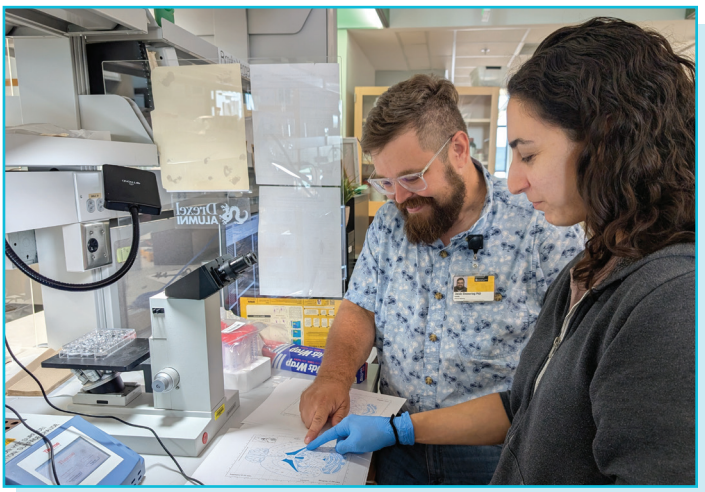
Tremors and involuntary movements most typically lead to a diagnosis. Dr. Simmering's data may also reveal other recurring symptoms that could provide doctors with earlier signs of possible PD. For example, urinary problems and anxiety might also be valuable signs.

Dr. Simmering will use his detailed analysis to generate a forward-looking "risk score." This will identify people most at risk of developing the disease.

"These results will allow us to screen for people who have symptoms and characteristics similar to people who will go on to be diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, potentially allowing for earlier detection," he said.

With earlier detection, doctors can provide symptom relief sooner and enhance the quality of life for those with PD.

Meet more Parkinson's researchers! Explore our My PD Stories at Parkinson.org/MyPDStory



People Power: Turning a Diagnosis into a New Purpose

Steve Yellen was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2019 when he was in his mid-50s.

For a while, Steve thought he was managing his Parkinson's disease (PD). In reality, he remembers, "I was largely reacting to it." So, he decided to take a more active role, both in managing his own health and in improving outcomes for other people with PD.

One of Steve's first focus areas was exercise. Resources on movement from the Parkinson's Foundation were critical. The Foundation's recommendations gave him a clear, practical framework, which Steve used to ensure he was addressing multiple aspects of movement.

Over the past few years, that approach led Steve to complete seven triathlons, 11 Spartan obstacle course races and three races up the Empire State Building's stairs.

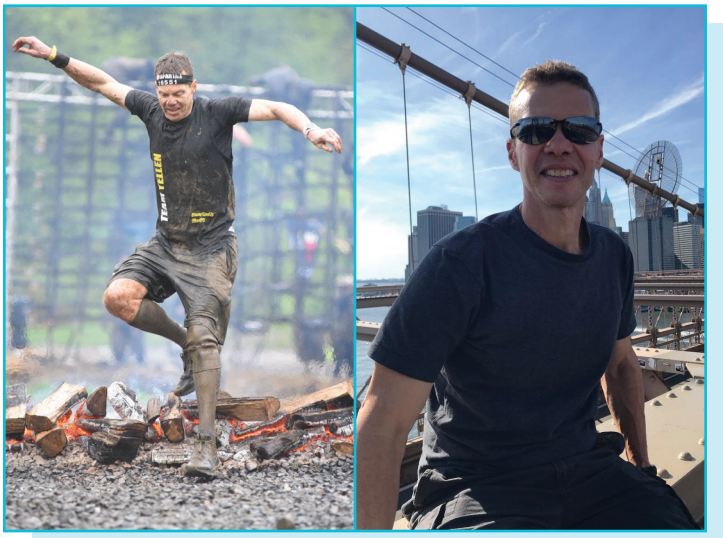
Advocacy became another focus. Steve became involved in supporting the National Plan to End Parkinson's Act. He met with the staff of seven U.S. senators before the landmark bill was passed. The experience reinforced Steve's belief that advocacy is accessible to anyone willing to engage.

At the same time, he became increasingly involved in PD research. He is a proud Parkinson's Foundation Ambassador and Research Advocate.

Feeling a responsibility to share all he's learned, Steve wrote a book called *Living Parkinson's*.

"My journey isn't defined by a diagnosis," Steve says. "It's defined by how I've chosen to respond. If sharing that perspective can help someone else take a more active role in their own journey, then the effort has been well worth it."

Help advocate for ways to make life better for people with Parkinson's. Get involved today at Parkinson.org/Advocacy



Left: Steve at the 2023 New Jersey Spartan obstacle course race. Right: Steve enjoying the sun on the Brooklyn Bridge.

CONTRIBUTION FORM

❑ **YES!** I want to support the innovative work of the Parkinson's Foundation so people with Parkinson's can live the best lives possible. Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of:

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