

75 YEARS OF PROGRESS

After her brother, Bernard, was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, Sylvia Lawry saw the need for an organized effort to encourage and finance research into the cause, treatment and cure of MS. On March 11, 1946, Ms. Lawry, a young woman without a scientific background, founded what would become the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

This year marks the 75th year of the National MS Society. We'll recognize this milestone by honoring the unprecedented progress we've made—more than any other neurological disease—resulting from one woman's vision and commitment. We'll also use our energy and enthusiasm to further boost our momentum and once and for all, achieve our vision for a world free of MS. Now is the time—we've never been closer to a cure!

Soon, the Society will release the Pathways to Cures roadmap to the MS research community and the world, a two-year effort to reach global consensus on the most promising research to an MS cure. This roadmap will provide investigators, like our latest Barancik Prize winner Dwight E. Bergles, PhD (see page 3), the direction, support and focus needed to speed solutions to people living with MS today and prevent MS for future generations to come.

As we look to the future, we know that the breakthroughs we achieve are made possible through dedicated donors like you. Long-time supporters like the McGraw family (see page 4) have been vital in funding our research successes and will be integral in supporting future research triumphs.

When people have questions and needs, we are here to provide a supportive partner. With your help, we continue to be a trusted resource—no one should face MS alone. For example, the National MS Society



Sylvia Lawry and her brother, Bernard

quickly became the largest source of information about MS and COVID-19 in the world—because that's what we needed to do. This includes our most recent guidance around the available vaccines informed by the world's top MS experts. (Page 2)

Thanks to you for making 75 years of progress possible. Collectively, we will continue the legacy of Sylvia Lawry and her vision to create a world free of MS.

Yours truly,

Cyndi

Cyndi Zagieboylo
President & CEO
National MS Society



SOCIETY CONVENES EXPERTS TO OFFER RELIABLE COVID-19 VACCINE GUIDANCE

After a challenging year, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorization of three COVID-19 vaccines—with more expected soon—has brought hope to many, including those living with MS. With that hope, also comes questions. We know that people with MS rely on the National MS Society as a source for trusted information and guidance.

To ensure we could offer the most reliable and accurate information, the Society brought together an advisory group composed of members of the Society's National Medical Advisory Committee and other MS specialists, MS clinicians, vaccine experts and virologists. The advisory group reviewed publicly available data for the authorized vaccines and came to a consensus based on their expertise that the three COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective for people living with MS. The group also developed guidance related to timing of the COVID-19 vaccines with MS treatments.

The Society made sure that this information could be disseminated broadly by dedicating a webpage (nationalMSSociety.org/covid19) with information available in English and Spanish about the COVID-19 vaccines so that people with MS have a resource they can turn to for their detailed, in-depth questions. Additionally, we shared this knowledge with our team of MS Navigators so that when people contact us with questions, the National MS Society has the answers.

To reach even more people in the MS community and offer them the opportunity to hear from experts first-hand, the Society's Ask an MS Expert series and the RealTalkMS podcast featured Nancy Sicotte, MD, National Medical Advisory Committee Chair and neurologist at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, who is leading the COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group. Dr. Sicotte shared, "The COVID-19 vaccines are safe for people with MS and if you have the opportunity to get a vaccine, take it as soon as you can." She also discussed the science behind the

task force's recommendations, delved into the details of the vaccines and answered specific questions for those living with MS. To listen to the Society's Ask an MS Expert series, visit nationalMSSociety.org/MSexpert, and to listen to the RealTalkMS podcast, visit realtalkMS.com.

As this is a rapidly evolving situation, the guidance shared by the Society's advisory group will be updated as more information becomes available and as additional vaccines are authorized.

The Society is proud to serve as a leader during this time thanks to the support of our incredible donors.

Like other medical choices, the decision to get a vaccine is best made in partnership with your healthcare provider. If you have specific questions about the vaccine, please speak with your healthcare provider or reach out to an MS Navigator at contactusnmss@nmss.org or 1-800-344-4867. ■



"Based on this information, we feel very confident that these vaccines will be safe for people with multiple sclerosis."

– Nancy Sicotte, MD

2020 BARANCIK PRIZE RECIPIENT USES NEW TOOLS TO UNCOVER MYELIN REPAIR



Dwight E. Bergles, PhD

Roles: Professor and Vice Chair of Research at The Solomon H. Snyder Department of Neuroscience, and Director of the Kavli Neuroscience Discovery Institute, at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

The Barancik Prize for Innovation in MS Research is made possible by the generous support of The Charles and Margery Barancik Foundation. The prize honors the legacies of its namesakes by recognizing an exceptional scientist whose work in MS research has demonstrated outstanding innovation and extraordinary potential to impact the lives of those living with MS.

Our 2020 award recipient, Dwight E. Bergles, PhD, pioneered the study of immature cells in the brain that can regenerate myelin-making cells after myelin is destroyed in MS. Dr. Bergles is also the previous recipient of a National MS Society Pilot Research Grant and he was a collaborator in a Society-supported Collaborative MS Center Award.

Currently, Dr. Bergles and his team study oligodendrocyte precursor cells (OPCs), cells that are crucial for regenerating myelin. When OPCs do not behave as they should, damaged myelin cannot be repaired, which can lead to lower function in nerves and can cause disability. Dr. Bergles's novel approach uses imaging technology that he invented to look into a living brain and see OPCs. Tracing these cells in a live brain provides completely new information about how quickly these cells move through the brain, their interactions with other cells and their responses to damaged myelin. By studying OPCs, their behavior, and how they interact with other cells, Dr. Bergles is uncovering new strategies for promoting myelin repair in MS.

“Advances in science are driven by innovation, but it takes the courage and commitment of individuals to translate the potential of new technologies into discoveries. I hope that the recognition of this award will encourage more young scientists to devote themselves to uncovering the mysteries of these remarkable cells and develop new therapeutic approaches to accelerate myelin repair in multiple sclerosis,” said Dr. Bergles.

Dr. Bergles understands that advances like those in his lab are only made possible with support from donors like you. “Science is not just doing the research; it also has to be supported by the government and by organizations like the National MS Society,” he says.

Your support is crucial to funding scientists like Dr. Bergles who are achieving innovations in MS research to bring us closer to a cure. Your role in the MS Movement supports all of our Barancik Prize recipients and is helping us write the last chapter for MS. ■



This year's recipient nominated by...

Dr. Jonah Chan, Inaugural Barancik Prize Recipient (2013)

“Dwight Bergles has consistently produced groundbreaking work and is recognized as a leader in MS research who is making important and novel discoveries that impact both the normal and the myelin-injured nervous system. In my humble opinion, no one has contributed more to our understanding of oligodendrocyte biology. Dwight has the remarkable ability for developing novel methodologies to address critical questions concerning remyelination, and he is highly deserving of the Barancik Prize.”

A FAMILY'S MISSION: PROGRESSING RESEARCH AND CHANGING LIVES

Brothers Robin, Josh and Dave McGraw are third generation stewards of their influential family foundation, which they took over after the passing of their father, Donald C. McGraw, Jr. The foundation was started by their grandfather Donald C. McGraw, long time President and CEO of McGraw Hill Publishing, who was the youngest son of founder James H. McGraw. Josh, Robin and Dave didn't inherit their responsibility of managing the foundation lightly, knowing that they had a noble history of giving to uphold.

"We're trying to touch as many lives as we can in the best way," says Dave. "We're dedicated to taking care of our brothers and sisters who can't take care of themselves." The foundation's responsiveness to the needs of education and literacy, the arts and medicine highlight the family's desire to respond to modern needs. Reflecting on the foundation's growth and breadth of causes, Josh shares, "Our family believes that our father and grandfather would be proud of the foundation's legacy and our positive impact addressing the most urgent needs of society."

The inspiring giving of this foundation's new generation has included many generous donations to the National MS Society. The family's interest in supporting people with MS first began when Robin joined the Greater New England chapter of the Society as a board member. Several years later, the cause struck closer to home when Josh's daughter was diagnosed with the disease. Dave's daughter also received a diagnosis years later. These two cousins now have first-hand experience of the challenges that come with MS, as well as the uncertainty of what their lives will look like in the future.

With two of their family members living with MS, the McGraw brothers were motivated to become more deeply involved with the Society. Josh and his wife Sacha became active fundraisers in North Florida, fundraising for Bike MS since 2011 in honor of their daughter. Brothers Dave and Robin have also worked hard to raise MS awareness and encourage others to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them by giving back to the cause.

"Fundraising is about telling your story," says Robin. "I have two nieces with MS and it means a lot for me to be able to figure out how to put an end to this disease. I will keep fighting until the mystery of MS is solved."



"If there is any legacy [of our foundation], it's that we've stepped up to play the part we've had to play to help people with MS." – Robin McGraw

The lifetime giving to the Society of the Donald C. McGraw Foundation currently exceeds \$3 million. Their recent gift of \$1 million will help to advance MS research focusing on myelin repair.

With their most recent gift, the Donald C. McGraw Foundation aims to expand the number of effective treatments available to people living with MS, including those that can repair myelin and restore lost function. By furthering today's exciting MS research momentum, the family hopes that a day will come when their help is not needed anymore.

The McGraw brothers realize that receiving FDA approval for new treatments can be a long process, but they're encouraged by knowing that there are many more options available today than just ten years ago when Josh's daughter was first diagnosed. They are committed to providing the support that allows researchers and scientists to keep plugging away so they can someday end this disease forever.

"Since we've started to support the Society, new medications have come out that have improved life for people with MS and helped to stop its progression," says Josh. "We don't have a cure yet, but the research we've helped to make possible has gone into developing these new drugs and therapies."

Through the Donald C. McGraw Foundation, the McGraw family plays an essential role in helping to change what it means to live with MS. The outlook is positive thanks to their generous and steadfast support. The Society is grateful for their commitment to ending MS and inspiring others, through gifts of all sizes, to follow in their footsteps. ■