

Thankful for Amaranth Support as We Move Toward Cures for Diabetes

Submitted by Angela Nazworth, Director of Philanthropic Communications, American Diabetes Association

Wow! The Amaranth Diabetes Foundation's recent gift of \$505,622.51 to the American Diabetes Association Research Foundation left all of us at the ADA speechless with gratitude. With this latest gift, the cumulative giving from ADF has surpassed \$14,800,000! It is an honor to once again thank all members of the Order of the Amaranth for working tirelessly to support diabetes science.

This generous contribution will be directed to the following three research projects:

- Understanding the Connections between Cholesterol and Diabetes led by Dr. Jeffrey S. Elmendorf from Indiana University in Indianapolis
- Regenerating Beta Cells to Treat and Prevent Diabetes led by Dr. Laura Alonso from the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester
- Improving Wound Therapy to Reduce Amputations in Diabetes led by Dr. Lawrence A. Lavery from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, in Dallas

You will be hearing a lot about these research projects at various Amaranth Grand Court sessions throughout the next year and in the next issue of the *Crown and Sword*.

Each Amaranth-sponsored study will answer a few questions that will lead to advancements in diabetes care. Together we are making great strides toward finding cures for diabetes. No, the "s" on the end of "cure" was not a typo. I really did mean to write "cures" and not "a cure." In her speech at the 118th Informal Opening of the Supreme Assembly of the Order of the Amaranth, Janel Wright, Chair of the American Diabetes Association National Board, nicely explained why there won't be just one cure for diabetes. Since not all Amaranth members were able to attend the Supreme Assembly in Washington, below is an excerpt from Janel's speech.

"Since 1979, your members have raised nearly \$15 million for diabetes research. That is incredible, and we simply cannot thank you enough. All of your hard work is making a difference!"

I offer my gratitude to you not just as a representative of the American Diabetes Association, but as a person with type 1 diabetes. Like many of you in this room, the fight against diabetes is personal. I was diagnosed with diabetes when I was 13 years old. I'll never forget how my mom broke the news to me. She sat me down in the living room, knelt beside me, and said, 'Honey, Dr. Brandt called with the results of your blood test and you are going to have to take insulin.' You see, my Mom had a brother and a sister with type 1 diabetes and because she knew the trials, tribulations, and heartaches of the diagnosis, she could not bring herself to tell me I had diabetes. Shortly after my diagnosis, I was told it was not expected that I would live past 50 years old.

However, the amazing thing is that in the 40 years I've had diabetes there have been such tremendous strides in research and technology that I am still here, alive, and well. When I was diagnosed in 1975, I used NPH U-100, a newly developed insulin derived by insulin extraction from beef and pigs. It had a

slow absorption rate and I took one shot a day. Today, analog insulin, also known as human insulin, is grown in labs. We have insulin pumps and continuous glucose monitors. Clinical trials are underway for closed loop systems that marry insulin pumps, continuous glucose monitors, and utilize algorithms unique to the person with diabetes to administer insulin and avoid huge fluctuations in the glucose range, which research has shown leads to complications.

The path to a cure has come a long way in my lifetime and was made possible because the American Diabetes Association and its Research Foundation with generous contributions such as those received from the Amaranth Diabetes Foundation. This support for scientific research has led to advances that have improved my life and the lives of the nearly 29 million people in the United States with diabetes.

However, you may be thinking the same thing I've thought before myself:

'Making life more comfortable and manageable for people with diabetes is great ... but why hasn't diabetes been cured?'

*A wise biologist once said, 'Biology is not rocket science. It's harder.' Biology is complicated. The processes that go on inside our cells are complex because our cells have to be able to respond to different circumstances. For example, after we eat and blood glucose levels rise, our bodies need to be able to sense this situation and release insulin to shuttle glucose from the blood into our cells where it is used as a source of energy. This isn't simple –there are many different steps that can go wrong, causing insulin not to be released or causing it not to be properly used. Any one of these different missteps can cause diabetes. **Since diabetes has MANY different causes, there will not be a single cure. I know we all hear and read news stories boasting that A CURE for diabetes is within our reach, but those claims are often exaggerated and premature.** In reality, we need a cure for EACH of the different causes, and we haven't even discovered ALL of the different causes yet. Some are genetic; others may depend on environmental conditions, and even what kind and how much bacteria live in our guts.*

*This is why the ADA is committed to supporting a wide range of research that can find answers to all the different causes of diabetes, and one day, stop diabetes for good. **We believe that the best way to do this is to continue to fund the very best science conducted by top researchers at academic institutions across the U.S. And, that's what we're doing thanks to help from the Amaranth Diabetes Foundation and our other philanthropic friends.***

While we are focused on curing diabetes, the research that we have funded has provided information that has resulted in some meaningful outcomes for people living with diabetes today.

As a matter of fact, it was recently reported that people with diabetes are living longer, healthier lives with far fewer complications of diabetes. Over the course of 20 years, heart attacks related to diabetes are down more than two-thirds, strokes and amputations were reduced by more than half, and kidney disease was cut by almost a third.

To continue this progress and to find cures, funding biomedical research is essential. Even though diabetes is one of the most common and devastating diseases in the nation, federal funding for diabetes

research is severely inadequate, so all that we are doing together is critical to making a difference in efforts to Stop Diabetes.

So, once again, THANK YOU for all you do to help us. We can't stop and we won't stop until we Stop Diabetes. I'm truly inspired by all of your creative fundraising efforts!"

All of us at ADA echo Janel's sentiments. We are very grateful and will continue to do our part to enhance communication efforts to inform Amaranth members of how your money is being spent and other news related to diabetes and diabetes research. This past June, H.L. Bizzy Herbolsheimer and H.L. June Haas attended the ADA Scientific Sessions in Boston. While at this convention, which is the world's largest diabetes research meeting, Honored Ladies Bizzy and June got to meet with two Amaranth-sponsored researchers, ADA's new CEO, Kevin L. Hagan, and many other top diabetes scientists such as Dr. David Marrero who serves on ADA's National Board of Directors as President of Healthcare and Education. Dr. Marrero also is a J.O. Ritchey Endowed Professor of Medicine and Director, Diabetes Translational Research Center, at Indiana University School of Medicine.

We look forward to sharing even more information with all Amaranth members throughout the year.