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For Immediate Release



THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION FORMS NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH THE BACHMANN-STRAUSS DYSTONIA AND PARKINSON FOUNDATION

**Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia and Parkinson Foundation Establishes Prize for
Excellence in Dystonia Research with Annual Research Grant of \$100,000**

**Selection Committee chaired by Ted Dawson MD, PhD, the Leonard and Madlyn
Abramson Professor of Neurodegenerative Diseases at The Johns Hopkins
University School of Medicine**

NEW YORK, September 17, 2014 — The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) and The Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia and Parkinson Foundation (BSDPF) announced today a new collaborative research alliance to facilitate greater visibility and deeper investment in advancing dystonia and Parkinson's research. The partnership establishes a major dystonia research prize to expand public awareness, acknowledge key scientific discoveries and incentivize the work of dedicated researchers in dystonia, an under-funded movement disorder and an under-recognized symptom of Parkinson's disease (PD).

Beginning January 1, 2015, BSDPF will transition its daily operations to MJFF and refocus its funding in support of the annual prize, the Bachmann-Strauss Prize for Excellence in Dystonia Research. Additionally, the partnership enables continued funding of research that explores overlaps in the underlying causes, development and treatment of dystonia and Parkinson's, which share common forms of therapeutic care.

“Our foundation has always served a dual mission of funding research to find better treatments for both dystonia and Parkinson's. By aligning with MJFF now and taking on this new role, we have opportunities to make an even greater impact and generate more awareness for dystonia on a much larger and brighter stage,” said Bonnie Strauss, founder and president of BSDPF. “It's an opportune time to strategically shift our approach and leverage the current renewed interest in studying the brain and its disorders.”

Due in no small part to the leadership of BSDPF, the field of dystonia research has seen great advances over the past two decades. The discovery of three new dystonia-implicated genes has driven increased understanding of the cause of the disease, leading to novel therapeutic targets. Four Centers of Excellence have been established around the

United States, bringing together “one-stop” convenience for people with dystonia and Parkinson’s disease to obtain the best clinical care and coordinated support services. Advances in deep brain stimulation surgery, including improved precision and safety in techniques for operating in deep brain structures, have expanded the use of this technique to increase quality of life for people with dystonia.

Recognizing Top Researchers in Rare Disorder

In creating the annual Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia Prize for Excellence in Dystonia Research, BSDPF and MJFF are attracting greater attention to a research area that remains underrecognized and underfunded. Established by BSDPF and conferred by MJFF, the Prize will honor an active researcher who has made profound contributions to the field with preference given to individuals who have made major discoveries with clear patient relevance. The Prize may recognize current cutting-edge research, an individual’s past body of work, or both. The award will be accompanied by an unrestricted research grant of \$100,000 to support further research in the awardee’s laboratory.

A Prize committee chaired by Ted Dawson MD, PhD, the Leonard and Madlyn Abramson Professor of Neurodegenerative Diseases at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, will serve as the jury panel. The committee will convene annually to nominate potential award recipients and select the winner.

Consisting of experts in neuroscience research, the committee will also include one member affected by dystonia or a family member of someone affected by dystonia. BSDPF Founder Bonnie Strauss will serve in this role. The first Bachmann-Strauss Prize for Excellence in Dystonia Research will be presented at a ceremony in New York City in May 2015.

Collaborative Track Record of Success

Many of the most important advances made in understanding dystonia have come from Parkinson’s research. Some treatments that started in PD have proven effective for dystonia as well, with many of the drugs used to treat Parkinson’s applicable to dystonia and dyskinesia, which is excessive movement caused by long-term dopamine replacement therapy.

As such, BSDPF and MJFF have shared a productive working relationship for nearly a decade collaborating on major studies, sharing scientific advisors and funding many of the same researchers. Some of the experts involved in BSDPF’s new movement disorder centers for excellence are on the MJFF Scientific Advisory Board.

While MJFF is solely dedicated to ensuring the development of better treatments, and ultimately a cure, for PD, the Foundation brings a proven track record of leveraging significant resources in areas that overlap between Parkinson’s and dystonia research, funding millions since inception in 2000. The work MJFF is doing in basal ganglia circuitry and deep brain stimulation has benefitted dystonia patients significantly.

“Bachmann-Strauss has been a valued partner to us for many years. We share a commitment to advancing research that will lead to transformative medical treatments patients so urgently need,” said Todd Sherer, PhD, CEO of The Michael J. Fox Foundation. “In creating this alliance, MJFF’s drive to accelerate Parkinson’s drug development continues to move forward. Partnering with BSDPF allows us to deepen our work together in support of high-impact scientific findings that will benefit both dystonia and Parkinson’s patients.”

In its search to find a partner, Bachmann-Strauss was also looking to align with an organization that could help bring greater prominence to dystonia. The relatively limited population of people affected by the disease makes it challenging to generate awareness and attract funding for research. Through MJFF’s global network, prestigious platform and wealth of resources, the alliance will elevate exposure of dystonia, and its connection to Parkinson’s, to new and broader audiences.

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About The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research

As the world’s largest private funder of Parkinson’s research, The Michael J. Fox Foundation is dedicated to accelerating a cure for Parkinson’s disease and improved therapies for those living with the condition today. The Foundation pursues its goals through an aggressively funded, highly targeted research program coupled with active global engagement of scientists, Parkinson’s patients, business leaders, clinical trial participants, donors and volunteers. In addition to funding more than \$300 million in research to date, the Foundation has fundamentally altered the trajectory of progress toward a cure. Operating at the hub of worldwide Parkinson’s research, the Foundation forges groundbreaking collaborations with industry leaders, academic scientists and government research funders; increases the flow of participants into Parkinson’s disease clinical trials with its online tool, Fox Trial Finder; promotes Parkinson’s awareness through high-profile advocacy, events and outreach; and coordinates the grassroots involvement of thousands of Team Fox members around the world.

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About The Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia & Parkinson Foundation

The Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia & Parkinson Foundation was established in 1995 to find better treatments and cures for the movement disorders dystonia and Parkinson's disease and to provide medical and patient information. Lou Bachmann (1916-2000) and Bonnie Strauss founded The Bachmann-Strauss Dystonia & Parkinson Foundation (BSDPF) in 1995 as a nonprofit 501(c)3. The Foundation was started to encourage new scientific research in the fields of dystonia and Parkinson's disease and to heighten awareness about the diseases. The Foundation is also the leading organization actively looking at the interface between dystonia and Parkinson’s disease. Early stages of scientific research are often the hardest to fund. Following a similar concept to that of a "venture capital" fund, seed money is funded through annual grants, which help to leverage new ideas and

advances in the fields. To date, the Foundation has raised over \$35 million dollars and funded 235 grants in the U.S. and abroad.