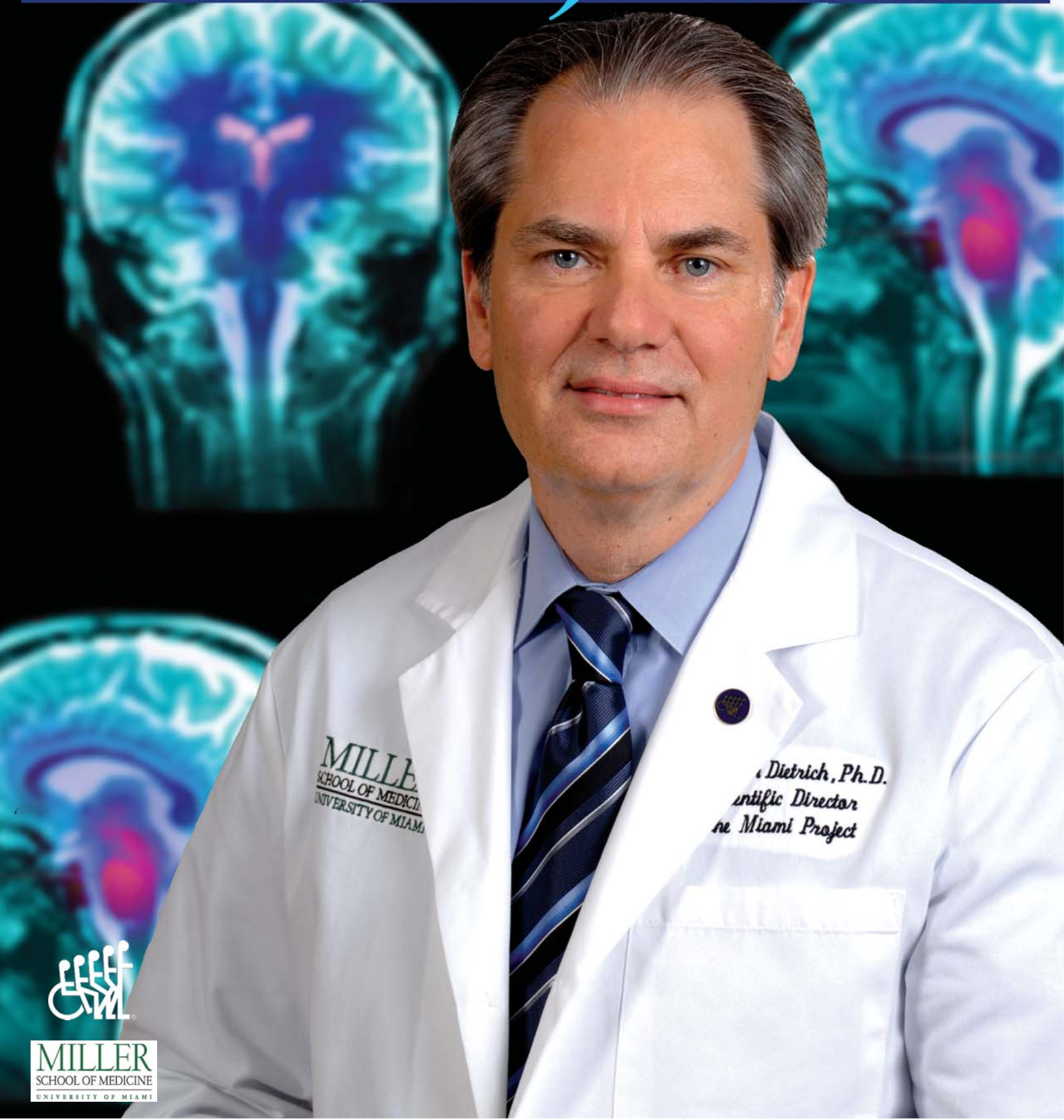


2008

THE PROJECT

A PUBLICATION OF THE MIAMI PROJECT TO CURE PARALYSIS AND THE BUONICONTI FUND TO CURE PARALYSIS



MILLER
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI



“...it was with my undying passion and commitment to the cause of curing paralysis that I proudly and enthusiastically accepted this most important role.”

Marc Buoniconti

The New President of
The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis

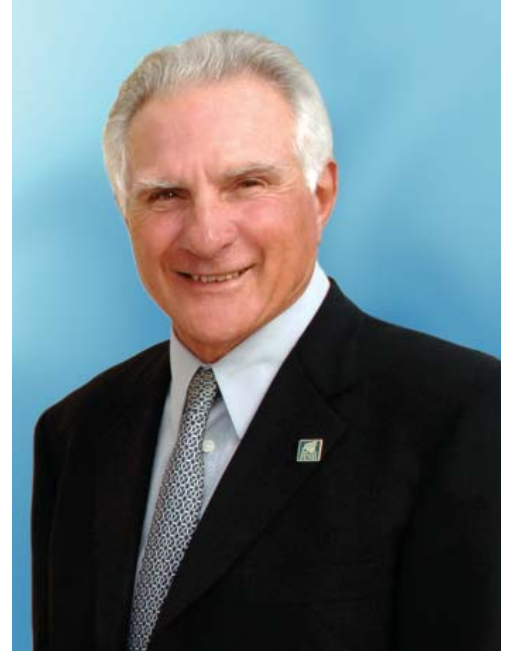
One of my greatest honors and humbling experiences occurred this year when Dr. Barth A. Green requested that I take over as the new President of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. I immediately realized the enormity of the responsibility of being President, but it was with my undying passion and commitment to the cause of curing paralysis that I proudly and enthusiastically accepted this most important role. I am so proud to work with this incredible team of researchers and staff that have dedicated their lives to stand up for those who can't. As the newly-appointed President, I have enjoyed the camaraderie and friendship of my colleagues; Chairman Dr. Barth A. Green, Scientific Director, Dr. Dalton Dietrich and Executive Director, Suzie Sayfie. I am moved by the opportunity to continue working with such fervent and professional individuals like Barth, Dalton and Suzie. The Miami Project is fortunate to have the executive leadership and an outstanding scientific team that is leading us to our first-ever human clinical trials involving cellular transplantation. Our human Schwann cell study is being reviewed by the Food and Drug Administration and we are all working together to hasten the process of beginning a clinical trial in humans as soon as possible. I have never been more optimistic and excited about our research at The Miami Project. It is only through the continued support of you, our family and friends, that The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund are where they are today – on the verge of a cure.

Marc Buoniconti
President, The Miami Project
President, The Buoniconti Fund

YOU RAISE ME UP

Many events in a person's life **raise** their spirits and lift their souls. In the years since Marc's injury and the conception of The Miami Project, each new year brings another reason **to raise me up**.

In the past year since we announced the groundbreaking **Human Clinical Trials Initiative**, my son Marc was named President of The Miami Project, reaffirming his unflagging work and dedication to find a cure for paralysis, and his indispensable and inspirational leadership at this institution, nationally, and throughout the world. In the past year, Buffalo Bills player Kevin Everett made a remarkable recovery from a spinal cord injury suffered during an NFL game, benefitting from the great research breakthroughs conducted at The Miami Project on the use of hypothermia right after spinal cord or traumatic brain injury. Finally, in the past year, our dedicated scientists began to vigorously launch the pre-clinical safety studies to determine the best doses of the drugs and cells that are needed to obtain FDA approval to begin transplantation of Schwann cells to the injured human spinal cord, in combination with injections of rolipram and cyclic AMP.



The task of reversing paralysis is challenging and expensive, but The Miami Project is confident it has the scientific knowledge to navigate through the FDA approval process and translate our experimental findings to the clinic. However, as we approach the end of this approval process, we want to ensure that we have the financial support needed to move ahead, so what we have worked so hard for is not delayed for even one day.

And so I say, to all of you in the spinal cord injury community, to Drs. Green and Dietrich and the tireless and splendid international multidisciplinary team of over 200 scientists, technicians and clinicians - the outstanding Buoniconti Fund Board, to all of our many sponsors and generous donors who have remained steadfast in their support for over 23 years, to President Donna Shalala and Dean Pascal Goldschmidt of the University of Miami and Miller School of Medicine - to the entire hard-working staff - and finally, to you Marc, and the millions like you who have suffered so long; you are an inspiration to me, to everyone -

YOU RAISE ME UP, so I can continue to work hard for spinal cord injury research;

YOU RAISE ME UP with the incredible scientific breakthroughs;

YOU RAISE ME UP, by your generosity for all of those in need of care;

I AM STRONG, when your commitment continues to grow;

YOU RAISE ME UP to know that millions of paralyzed individuals WILL SOON WALK on their own again.

Nicholas A. Buoniconti
Co-Founder, The Miami Project
Founder, The Buoniconti Fund



www.themiamiproject.org
www.thebuonicontifund.org

Chairman and Founder, The Miami Project
Barth A. Green, M.D.

Founder, The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund
Nick A. Buoniconti

President, The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund
Marc A. Buoniconti

Scientific Director, The Miami Project
W. Dalton Dietrich, III, Ph.D.

Executive Director, The Miami Project
Buoniconti Fund Board Member
Suzie Sayfie

Editor, Maria J. Amador, B.S.N., C.R.R.N.
Managing Editor, Scott Roy
Graphic Editor, Robert Camarena
Executive Editor, Suzie Sayfie

Contributors
Maria Amador, Stephanie Sayfie Aagaard, John Bailey, Teri Bendell,
Dwayne Campbell, Maria Chagoyen, W. Dalton Dietrich, Megan
Hess, Jeanne Antol Krull, Jackie Tommasino, Kristin Wherry

Photographs
Thomas Briglia, Scherley Busch, Robert Camarena, Paul Emans
Jim Mandeville, Henry Perez, Timothy Saltsman, Tom Stepp,
Alberto Tamargo, Verrill Family, Claude Zick

Administrative Director
Diana Berning

**Director, Major Gifts, Corporate Relations,
Marketing and Events**
Stephanie Sayfie Aagaard

Director, Education, Program Information & Referral
Maria Amador, B.S.N., C.R.R.N.

Director, Public Relations & Communications
Scott Roy

Director, Web Services, Auction and Database Management
Teri Bendell

Director, Government Relations
Randy Medenwald

Director, Annual Giving
Megan Hess

Director, Buoniconti Fund National Chapters
Kristin Wherry

Director, Foundations and Grants
Francine Schoen

Director, Operations
Bill Sims

Physical Address: 1095 NW 14th Terrace, R-48
Miami, FL 33136
Phone: 305-243-6001

Mailing Address: Post Office Box 016960, R-48
Miami, FL 33101

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THE PROJECT

A Publication of The Miami Project To Cure Paralysis & The Buoniconti Fund To Cure Paralysis

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Events to Benefit The Miami Project

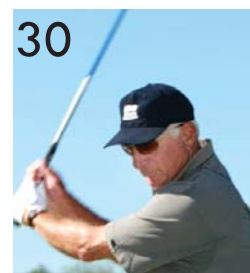
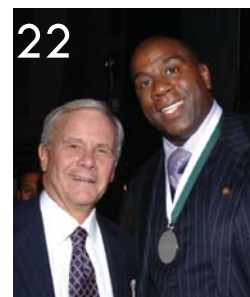
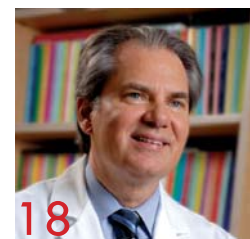
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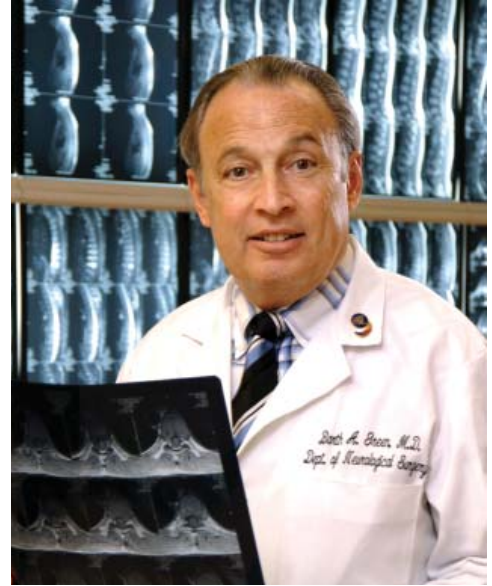
In Memoriam

- 35 Roger King



Dear Friends of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis:

Our dedicated basic science and clinical research team have spent more than 20 years doing meticulous evidence-based research focused on the goal of improving the quality of life for the millions of people who look up at the world each day from their wheelchairs. The results of these programs have directly impacted the practice of medicine in clinic and operating rooms here and around the world, including obtaining FDA approval for rehabilitation and surgical interventions that are now considered a routine part of patient care. As a third generation physician, I have no greater joy and accomplishment than being able to truly make a contribution to the art and science of medicine. I am not just taking advantage of the work of so many physicians and scientists who have preceded me. Rather, I am part of a team that is making medical history and “rewriting the medical textbooks.” Each of our successful discoveries and treatments are not from individual efforts but from the cooperative and collaborative work of The Miami Project Research Team.



In most of our minds, a second major goal continues to be the most important – to re-establish function for those who have new spinal cord injuries, as well as for those, like our wonderful President, Marc Buoniconti, who have spent years and even decades sitting in their wheelchairs, not just waiting but working hard to support this monumental effort.

New this year? The Miami Project has established a translational research team that has already initiated a number of clinical trials focused on both acute spinal cord injury and intraoperative spinal cord protection using hypothermia. Several major studies are being prepared in cooperation with other centers across the country and around the world. These studies will examine agents, medications and techniques, developed here and elsewhere, that minimize or reverse the paralysis occurring from new injuries. What the Marc Buonicontis of the world have been waiting for is translation of the more than 200 million dollars worth of basic science research into a clinical treatment. A clinical trial plan for Schwann cell transplants has been presented to the FDA and we are working with them to expedite the initiation of this trial aimed at regeneration and reconnection of important spinal cord tracts and function. A special fundraising campaign to support this program has been very successful, but needs to be ramped up in order to more rapidly cross the finish line.

Please join hands with the hundreds of Miami Project scientists and clinicians, and hundreds of their colleagues across the United States and around the world, who are working together to make this dream a reality. Please stay tuned and we will keep you informed of where we stand with all of the wonderful research programs that carry opportunities as well as an equal number of challenges.

With all of my warmest regards.

Sincerely,

Barth A. Green, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Professor and Chairman
Department of Neurological Surgery
Chairman
The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis

Therapeutic Hypothermia

A Hot Topic and a Cold Process

Therapeutic hypothermia is a procedure that uses different methods to cool the body after neurological disorders such as stroke, cardiac arrest, brain and spinal cord insults.

Cooling the body is similar to using an icepack for a bruise or muscle ache; it reduces swelling of the tissues and inflammation in the injured site. By slowing down the body's natural inflammatory response, therapeutic hypothermia reduces secondary destructive processes that would normally lead to cell death and injury.

Therapeutic hypothermia is a hot topic and a very cool procedure. Since the 1940s, physicians have attempted to use a variety of approaches to cool the bodies of people who had sustained injuries due to stroke, cardiac arrest, traumatic brain or spinal cord insults, and brain and aortic aneurysms.

For a decade, the practice of cooling patients continued as an experimental procedure for those suffering from cancers, head injuries, and during cardiac surgery. Various hypothermic approaches were tested in hopes of reducing the damages related to traumatic insults and to slow the progression of diseases.

By the 1950s, complications with profound hypothermia convinced most clinical investigators that hypothermia was too difficult to achieve and maintain, and was a risk to the overall health of an injured patient. Some medical professionals persevered in their investigations of the use of hypothermia, but most of the attempts to create conditions that might effectively control swelling and limit cell death were discontinued.

But, an enduring fact was that cooling practices did have positive effects and results that could be understood scientifically. There had to be a breakthrough – and there was. In the mid-1980s, The Miami Project's Scientific Director, W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D., and his colleagues,



discovered that mild hypothermia – lowering the body just a few degrees – might be optimally protective against the acute and progressive damages of traumatic injuries to central nervous system tissues.

“Our studies were quite different than the studies in the 1950s when profound hypothermia was used,” says Dr. Dietrich. “In experimental models of brain and spinal cord injury, we have shown that modest cooling is protective and improves outcome when it is administered early after an injury.”

Because of his extensive dedication to pre-clinical research concerning hypothermia treatments in experimental models, Dr. Dietrich was able to determine that mild hypothermia therapy also targets multiple pathological processes following central nervous system trauma. These

processes are called “secondary injury mechanisms,” and continue to cause damage to the tissues in a series of negative events, much like a “domino effect”. Initial damages usually lead to irreversible impairments, as Marc Buoniconti and so many others who live with disabling degrees of paralysis will attest to.

Many investigators agree that mild hypothermia for central nervous system injuries has positive effects. Researchers have discovered that lowering the body temperature by even one degree decreases the brain’s metabolic rate. (The metabolic rate refers to the use of the brain’s energy sources, or all of the physical and chemical activities that occur during brain function.) By slowing down the metabolic rate, secondary damages can be arrested, which preserves the brain’s neurological functions.

But, cooling the body or brain is not a simple process. One of the

Temperature Mechanisms in Brain and Spinal Cord Injury

1. Metabolism (1970)	14. Inflammation (1991)
2. pH (1992)	15. Platelet function (1987)
3. Neurotransmitter Levels (1982)	16. NMDA neurotoxicity (1991)
4. Free fatty acids (1989)	17. Cytoskeletal proteins (1993)
5. Blood-brain barrier (1990)	18. Growth factors (1994)
6. Edema (1987)	19. Calcium-dependent protein phosphorylation (1990)
7. Glucose metabolism (1987)	20. Heat shock protein (1992)
8. Cerebral blood flow (1954)	21. Immediate early genes (1996)
9. Free radical activation (1994)	22. NOS activity (1999)
10. Lipid peroxidation (1994)	23. NMP expression (2003)
11. Calcium accumulation (1992)	24. Apoptosis (2004)
12. Protein synthesis (1991)	25. MAPK signaling (2006)
13. Protein kinase-C activity (1991)	

Mild hypothermia improves functional outcome after injury by reducing many mechanisms believed to participate in neuronal cell death.

now being monitored for temperature fluctuations; cooling blankets are used to maintain “normothermia” (a temperature that is close to normal). For internal cooling purposes, catheters have been developed that can be inserted into the body’s vessels. These instruments have

Currently, with refinements to the experimental treatment designs, physicians are administering mild hypothermia by placing a cooling catheter into a patient’s large blood vessel and slowly lowering the body’s temperature to 33 degrees Celsius (or 92 degrees Fahrenheit). The cooling

The clinical application of what was, for so long, relegated to the lab, “...made for a ‘home run’ for our researchers. One of the most challenging goals of medical research is to develop treatments that change how we approach the brain and spine-injured patient.”

common occurrences in patients who have a spinal cord or brain injury is fever. Extreme temperature spikes tend to happen soon after central nervous system injuries. Here at The Miami Project, Dr. Dietrich and Helen Bramlett, Ph.D., have found that even small elevations in the temperature of central nervous system tissues following an injury worsen the prognosis. All of the pathological processes that occur after a traumatic event are exacerbated by an increase in the temperature. Fortunately, these findings have been “translated” from the lab to clinical settings. Patients are

the capacity to quickly regulate the temperature, avoiding the negative consequences of fever.

These and other new designs for effective and safe procedures using therapeutic hypothermia are gaining approval in numerous research institutions and hospitals. It has taken time, as all good scientific endeavors must, to do the essential, experimental studies using animal models of traumatic brain and spinal cord injury. But, research that stands the test of the lab can, and usually does, take years.

catheter cools the blood as it passes over the catheter that is connected to a cooling unit beside the patient’s bed.

For approximately 48 hours, the patient’s temperature is maintained at these levels. At the end of two days of cooling, the patient receives a warming procedure that slowly elevates his or her temperature by one degree every eight hours. All of the patients currently undergoing this specific hypothermia treatment contribute to the knowledge base of Miami Project investigators, who are testing the benefits of the cooling


Therapeutic Hypothermia Continued from page 7

treatment when conducted within the first few hours of the original insult. The hope is that the severity of outcome will be reduced by immediate, or early therapeutic hypothermia.

TBI and SCI patients are now being carefully monitored in critical care units throughout the world. The pioneering work accomplished by Dr. Dietrich and his colleagues has led to changes in the guidelines of the American Heart Association for temperature management after cardiac arrest. Together, these clinical applications of what was, for so long, relegated to the lab, "...made for a 'home run' for our researchers, because one of the most challenging goals of medical research is to develop treatments that change how we approach the brain and spine-injured patient," Dr. Dietrich said. Although

experimental hypothermia treatments have been around for decades, the new procedures are showing enormous potential for successfully preventing the devastating consequences that usually occur following trauma to the brain or spinal cord.

With continued research and study, Miami Project investigators and colleagues within the Department of Neurological Surgery hope to improve the control of a patient's fluctuating temperature. They look forward to conducting skillfully-designed clinical trials of hypothermia for both brain-injured and spinal cord-injured patients.

"We believe that therapeutic hypothermia may have beneficial results and contribute to a potentially better outcome for those affected by traumatic injuries to the central nervous system," states Dr. Dietrich. 

For a man many believed would never walk again, former University of Miami Hurricane and National Football League (NFL) player Kevin Everett stood tall during a visit to The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. He was here to thank The Miami Project team, whose cutting-edge research ultimately played a role in his recovery from a spinal cord injury suffered during an NFL game last season.

In September 2007, the first weekend of the NFL season at Buffalo's Ralph Wilson Stadium, Everett sustained a life-threatening spinal cord injury. He was attempting to tackle the Denver Bronco's, Domenik Hixon, during the second-half kickoff, when they collided violently and Everett fell to the field.

Andrew Cappuccino, M.D., the team's physician, gave Everett a hypothermic treatment – the introduction of a cold saline solution – into his body. Cappuccino had heard a lecture on hypothermia by W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D., and thought he might use a hypothermia treatment if he encountered a person who had a severe cervical injury.

"He made a major step by utilizing an experimental treatment that we have studied experimentally for several years" Dr. Dietrich said. "It was really fantastic vision on his part to have everything in place, including the cold saline in the emergency vehicle, and to start the cooling very early – immediate action is critical in terms of acute care."



Dr. Barth Green, Dean Pascal Goldschmidt, Marc Buoniconti, Kevin Everett and Dr. W. Dalton Dietrich

Marc A. Buoniconti, Barth Green, M.D., and Dr. Dietrich were thrilled that Everett benefited from research at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis housed in the Lois Pope LIFE Center based at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Marc Buoniconti said, "I think that over the last 23 years we've been able to see that the research has culminated into something great. The next step is to get us all out of these wheelchairs."

Clinical Trials Initiative Update

In the last issue of *The Project*, Nick and Marc Buoniconti announced that The Miami Project had embarked on a Human Clinical Trials Initiative. Over the course of the last year, The Miami Project has pursued various activities that fall under the umbrella of the Initiative. We anticipate these activities will bring new and potentially life-changing treatments to people with central nervous system trauma.

- Therapeutic Hypothermia:** The Miami Project and the University of Miami (UM) Department of Neurological Surgery have launched a significant initiative to study hypothermia treatment for acute traumatic spinal cord injury (SCI) in a multicenter clinical trial. (For more on hypothermia, see page 6) For the treatment to become a standard in acute SCI care, a randomized, prospective trial involving multiple centers will be needed to prove that hypothermia is safe and effective. University of Miami neurosurgeons are discussing the possibility of conducting this trial with the Neurological Emergencies Treatment Trials group (NETT). NETT is a network of 17 academic medical centers with emergency care clinicians available to conduct large multicenter clinical trials. We are also exploring international research collaborations with neurosurgeons in Melbourne, Australia.
- Therapies and Diagnostics for Traumatic Brain Injury:** At least five new clinical trials in traumatic brain injury (TBI) will begin when clinical investigators receive approval from the UM Institutional Review Board (IRB). An IRB is a group of individuals comprised of faculty, staff and community members charged with ensuring that a clinical trial is ethical and the rights of study participants are protected. One of the trials, the Oxycyte trial, is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2008. Other scheduled studies will measure the levels of neurotoxins in cerebrospinal fluid and plasma of patients with acute TBI. As neurotoxins are thought to play a major role in TBI, the findings from these studies will help researchers design new drugs to blunt the release of neurotoxins and potentially improve the outcome of patients with TBI.
- Cethrin:** Miami Project neurosurgeon scientists are in negotiations with Alseres Pharmaceuticals, Inc., for the University of Miami to become an investigator site for a Phase 2 multicenter trial of the drug Cethrin. In preclinical studies, the drug has been shown to block an inhibitory injury mechanism that prevents axons from regrowing. A Phase 1 trial involving 27 patients with acute SCI has already been completed and suggests Cethrin is safe and well-tolerated. The data from this trial also suggests the treatment may improve a participant's motor and sensory function.
- Riluzole:** The Miami Project and the UM Department of Neurological Surgery have also become a part of the North American Clinical Trials Network (NACTN). NACTN is a network of institutions that is developing the infrastructure, methods and skilled personnel needed to conduct trials for SCI. Presently, the collaborative centers are collecting baseline and outcome data from newly injured patients to determine the outcomes and complications that occur in patients receiving the best standard of care. This information will help determine the design of SCI clinical trials. NACTN will conduct a clinical trial of the drug Riluzole. Riluzole has been approved for patients with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). In preclinical studies in experimental SCI, Riluzole has a neuroprotective effect by blocking sodium from entering damaged nerve cells, which may prevent them from swelling and dying. We expect to begin this Phase 1/2a trial at The Miami Project/UM once we receive IRB approval.

Clinical Trials Initiative Continued

Autologous Schwann Cells

One of The Miami Project's most anticipated human clinical trial initiatives is to test human Schwann cell transplants in humans with acute and chronic SCI. Over the past several months, we have been designing our preliminary Investigational New Drug (IND) submission to gain approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Synergy Day

On February 8, 2008, The Miami Project Schwann cell team became energized by Synergy Day, a day-long meeting dedicated to the memory of Richard P. Bunge, Ph.D., Miami Project Scientific Director from 1989 to 1996. The theme of the 2008 Synergy Day was "Cellular Therapy for SCI: Lessons Learned from Previous and Current Clinical Trials." The committee that organized the day was chaired by Mary Bartlett Bunge, Ph.D., and included Drs. James Guest, Vance Lemmon, Allan Levi and Patrick Wood.

Supported both financially and in concept by the Dean's office of the Miller School of Medicine, the meeting truly reflected the meaning of synergy. "This is a coming together of many insightful and thoughtful people who are ready to go ahead and really advance the technology [of Schwann cells] to its full realization," commented Bart Chernow, M.D., University of Miami Vice President of Special Programs and Resource Strategy and Senior Executive Advisor to the Dean. He encouraged those present to "speak up with your thoughts and ideas..."



Drs. Huhn, Lammertse and Vollmer answer Marc Buoniconti's questions at Synergy Day.

contribute, help one another, and leave egos at the door...that's what can advance science." The Miami Project team was eager to learn from the experiences of research colleagues who have been involved in developing and conducting clinical trials of cellular transplantation treatments in humans with SCI. Invited speakers were: Daniel Lammertse, M.D., medical director of Craig Rehabilitation Hospital, Engelwood, CO; Ms. Roxanne Réger, M.S., with the Center for Gene Therapy, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA; Stephen Huhn, Ph.D., vice president of the Neural Program, StemCells Inc., Palo Alto, CA; and Timothy Vollmer, M.D., Chief of Neurology, Barrow Neurological Institute, Phoenix, AZ.

Dr. Huhn and Ms. Réger, at their respective institutions, are preparing IND applications for submission to the FDA. Their applications will seek approval for clinical trials to examine the safety of stem cell (human fetal and adult bone marrow) treatments in patients with acute SCI. Dr. Lammertse had served as a physician investigator for the ProCord clinical trial sponsored by Proneuron. This clinical trial examined implants of activated macrophages into the injured spinal cord of patients with new injuries. Dr. Lammertse shared valuable practical advice about what the FDA expects of sponsors and investigators carrying out clinical trials.

We also received important insights and advice from Dr. Vollmer, a neurologist who was part of a team at Yale that designed and conducted a first-in-human trial of autologous transplantation of Schwann cells in people with multiple sclerosis (MS). He and his colleagues transplanted participants' own Schwann cells in an attempt to remyelinate injured areas of the brain caused by the MS.

Synergy Day gave The Miami Project team insight on various decisions that need to be made for the development and design of our proposed Phase 1 trial of Schwann cell transplants in people with SCI. Dr. Huhn congratulated The Miami Project on its efforts saying, "I give you a lot of credit for attempting to take the steps into a translational endeavor. It will be frustrating, and I would caution you to be prepared for delays and costs. But, I think in the end, the ability to move something from the laboratory into the human setting, particularly all in your own institution, is very, very exciting."

Communications with the FDA

Besides the worthwhile interactions of Synergy Day, The Miami Project has secured the services of regulatory consultants at Biologics Consultant Group, Inc. "Because


of their familiarity with the FDA's expectations, our consultants provided valuable guidance on the first documents we sent to the FDA to introduce our Schwann cell transplant project plan," remarked W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D. "They are well qualified to advise us on our project, as they are experts in developing cell and tissue-based therapy products and are knowledgeable about the evolving area of regenerative medicine." Biologics Consultant Group has an excellent reputation with the FDA for filing high-quality, easily reviewable applications. Because of their advice, we have made significant progress in the preclinical processes necessary to support a successful IND application to the FDA.

Human Schwann Cell Manufacturing Process

One required preclinical process relates specifically to how the Schwann cells are prepared for transplantation. To get enough cells, Schwann cells from the trial participant will be used to grow more of their own cells in culture dishes. We must follow Good Manufacturing Process (GMP) when processing the cells to assure the safety and quality of the cells used for transplantation. GMP is a standard recognized internationally that requires documentation of every aspect of the procedures, activities, and operations involved in manufacturing the cells. To become compliant with this standard, Patrick Wood, Ph.D. and Gagani Athauda, M.D., have been working with colleagues at the University of Miami's Wallace H. Coulter Center for Translational Research, where a GMP laboratory is available. Dr. Athauda has spent many hours in this laboratory receiving training from the Coulter Center staff on GMP procedures and, along with Dr. Wood, establishing Schwann cell manufacturing steps for human cells that will meet the expectations of GMP and the FDA.

Human Schwann Cell Safety

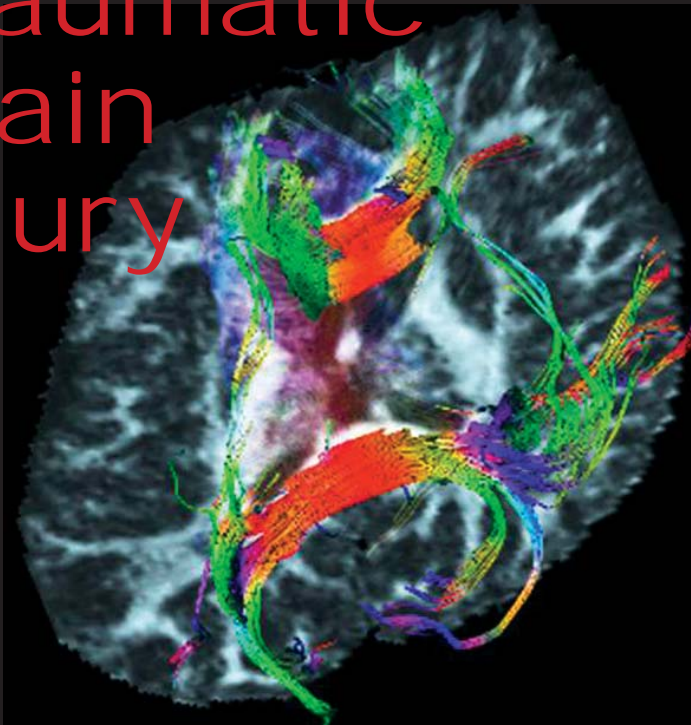
Another preclinical process we must complete is a group of studies to test the safety of human Schwann cells. In our previous safety experiments, rat Schwann cells in rats with SCI did not cause tumors, travel to areas away from the transplant site or cause neuropathic pain. To support our IND application, our regulatory consultants have advised that we need to provide evidence to the FDA that our clinical product – the human Schwann cells – are safe. These studies, conducted under conditions similar to GMP studies, will be outsourced to a GLP (Good Laboratory Practice) laboratory and will test whether human Schwann cells produce tumors or cause toxic reactions in rats with acute and chronic SCI. Importantly, these studies will examine transplants of cells that have been processed in the same way we intend to process human Schwann cells for the future clinical trial.

We are learning that achieving the required approval for a clinical trial is complex and very time-consuming. The process is necessary to assure the safety of a new treatment and provide reasonable expectations for its outcome. Because the regulation of cell-based therapies for SCI is a new area, we are helping to create the field with the FDA. Working closely with the FDA, we will move forward on our goal to initiate a Phase I clinical trial to assess safety and tolerability of human Schwann cells in people with spinal cord injury. The Miami Project has committed the time, the personnel and the resources to work as quickly as possible to make our goal a reality. 



First steps in the Schwann cell manufacturing process: Dr. Athauda dissects human peripheral nerve (inset) from which Schwann cells are isolated and then grown in culture.

Traumatic Brain Injury



A color coded MRI image, using a new technique, diffusion tensor imaging, shows areas where diffuse injury to axon bundles has taken place (red and yellow) in the brain of a person with severe head injury. The normal axon bundles are shown as green fibers.

Each year over 1.4 million people in the United States sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Approximately 235,000 of these individuals are hospitalized. According to the World Health Organization, TBI will surpass many diseases as the major cause of death and disability by the year 2020.

The leading causes of TBI in the civilian population are falls and motor vehicle accidents. However, brain trauma due to blast injury is the signature wound of the Iraq War. Although much work has been undertaken to develop new treatments to minimize the effects of brain trauma and promote functional recovery, currently there are no proven therapies for this devastating injury.

The brain and spinal cord are protected from external forces by the skull and vertebral bodies making up the spinal column. Blows to the head, compression of the spinal cord or penetrating wounds can damage the soft neuronal tissues within these protective structures. Primary insults such as trauma or lacerations result in damaged neurons and injured blood vessels. Broken blood vessels can also cause complex changes in the brain and spinal cord's blood flow, altering tissue metabolism and depriving the nervous tissues of critical nutrients and oxygen.

At The Miami Project, research on traumatic brain injury (TBI) is ongoing. Since 1992, this program has received continuous support from the National Institutes of Health. In 1997, when W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D., became the Scientific Director of the Miami Project, he brought with him an expertise in the study of TBI. Dietrich and colleagues investigate the pathological and

biochemical changes that occur after central nervous system (CNS) trauma including the testing of therapeutic interventions for potential clinical use after TBI and spinal cord injury (SCI). M. Ross Bullock, M.D., Ph.D., recently joined the Department of Neurological Surgery and The Miami Project, and is the Director of Clinical Neurotrauma at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. Drs. Bullock and Dietrich, along with other Miami Project investigators that include: Helen M. Bramlett, Ph.D., Daniel J. Liebl, Ph.D., Ian Hentall, Ph.D., Robert Keane, Ph.D., and Coleen M. Atkins, Ph.D., work on various aspects of trauma research. The focus of this group is to understand the mechanisms underlying neuronal injury and to design novel therapeutic strategies that will promote recovery of function in patients who experience TBI.

Although TBI and SCI are different injuries, The Miami Project also studies brain trauma because of the similarities between these

two types of trauma. “For some studies, such as examining synaptic plasticity, experiments in the brain are easier to perform than in the spinal cord,” Dr. Liebl comments. “The brain has a great many more cells than the spinal cord, and incalculable functions. But, it’s an error to think

Drs. Bramlett and Dietrich have delineated some of the acute and chronic outcomes of TBI and SCI: the acute neuropathology is multifaceted in both. When the brain swells, it has no place to expand and intracranial pressure (ICP) increases. Within hours of the initial accident, neurosurgeons

the brain. The network of axons critical for healthy functioning are reduced in number and show extensive injuries. To target circuit dysfunction, Dr. Hentall is evaluating the benefits of deep brain stimulation in an animal model of TBI. This work parallels his studies on stimulation after SCI.

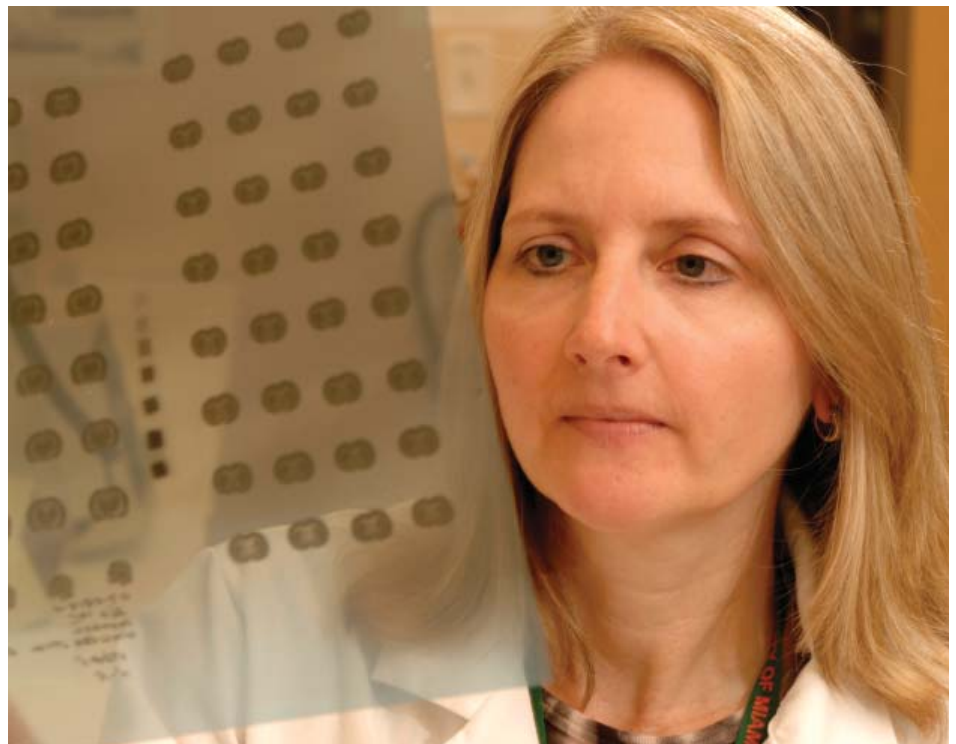
Together, Drs. Bullock and Dietrich will spearhead the Miami Project and Department of Neurological Surgery’s first involvement in clinical trials for patients who have acute traumatic brain injury.

of the mature spinal cord as ‘just a tract for messages’. It’s a complex system as well, and we believe that it has regenerative abilities similar to the brain.” “By studying traumatic brain injury in both human and in experimental settings,” states Dr. Dietrich, “we can potentially extend our discoveries to other neurological disorders and diseases.”

Miami Project scientists collaboratively explore the nature of the brain by using animal models of brain injury. These experimental paradigms closely mimic the post-injury consequences seen in human head trauma. The excitement generated in each lab involved in research on TBI is contagious. Dedicated and industrious researchers focus on experiments that yield information illuminating the acute and chronic effects of TBI, and the positive and negative responses of the brain to injury. The brain’s reactions to trauma serve as clues for its potential repair and regeneration. By examining the processes triggered after an insult to the CNS, researchers are discovering ways to block the negative changes and activate the positive mechanisms. In this way, experimental interventions may decrease the damaging effects of trauma and encourage the brain’s efforts at self-repair.

may perform craniotomies (incisions through the skull) to relieve the pressure in the brain. In the acute stages following TBI, after blood vessels and cells swell, cells disintegrate and are mopped up by other cells (phagocytosis), and vulnerable cell populations die (apoptosis). The brain’s local blood flow is severely decreased. Pathological conditions are apparent in the white and gray matter areas of

Inflammation is a normal immune response to injury, but after TBI, inflammation plays a large role in the degenerative physiology of the brain. “Pro-inflammatory” processes are triggered, leading to a sequence of inflammatory events that can cause the enlargement of the brain’s ventricles (internal fluid-filled cavities) and gross tissue death. If inflammation continues, the long-term consequences can affect both



Dr. Helen Bramlett examining film that shows abnormal patterns of regional brain function after injury.

Traumatic brain injury continued

the neurophysiologic and behavioral outcomes in patients. In SCI, similar inflammatory responses are described. Immediate anti-inflammatory treatments including modest hypothermia can reduce inflammatory events and protect both the brain and spinal cord from irreversible damage.

In 1997, Dr. Helen Bramlett was the first to show the progressive nature of damage in TBI. In experimental and clinical cases, evidence of progressive atrophy has now been shown to occur up to and past one year, with many of the acute response mechanisms remaining active. Blood flow disruptions may underlie ongoing tissue atrophy, as neither oxygen nor glucose levels are at adequate levels for tissue survival. At both the original site of injury and in more remote brain areas, structural degeneration proceeds. Gray and white matter in the brain show injury-specific, “severity-dependent,” progressive degeneration. Sensorimotor and cognitive deficits all exist as a result from the long-term effects of TBI. These chronic changes may also increase the brain’s vulnerability to later develop other neurodegenerative diseases and disorders such as Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s and epilepsy. Clinical studies have reported that there is a much greater increase in the incidence of a neurodegenerative disease in an individual who has sustained a prior head injury than for an uninjured person. “Continued research into the progressive nature of brain and spinal cord injury should provide new targets for treatment and better outcomes in patients who sustain these devastating injuries,” Bramlett asserts.

Dr. Dietrich and his colleagues have also pioneered the use of modest hypothermia treatment for brain and spinal cord injury. Although these therapies are experimental, mild



Top: Dr. Coleen Atkins uses a vibratome to cut sections of rat brain tissue. Bottom: She collects sections of injured and uninjured brain tissue for comparison and further investigation.

cooling appears to have a profound effect on limiting secondary injury mechanisms that are activated after brain and spinal cord injury. There are also ongoing studies using transplanted cells into the injured brain to facilitate recovery and repair. These studies are a consequence of similar successful studies in spinal cord injured animals where cell therapies have led to improvements in motor function.

Dr. Atkins is examining the changes that occur at the connections between neurons (synapses) following TBI. Alterations in synaptic function may be directly related to the memory loss associated with TBI. Dr. Atkins and colleagues are investigating a genetic intervention to combat the extensive axonal injuries seen in TBI. Diffuse

axonal injury is a powerful indicator of impairments in behavior, emotions and cognition after TBI. Studies in the laboratory have also identified a set of pro-inflammatory molecules that initiate a toxic, inflammatory feedback process that increases brain pathology. Using factors to suppress the pro-inflammatory molecules reduces swelling in the brain and improves recovery in experimental studies. But, since inflammation is a complex set of events that has both protective and damaging effects, therapeutic interventions that affect inflammatory activities must be carefully engineered and executed at select times.

Dr. Liebl focuses on the developing nervous system as well as on the post-injury state of the CNS.



M. Ross Bullock, M.D., Ph.D., is the lead investigator for the first traumatic brain injury clinical trials at The Miami Project and the UM Department of Neurological Surgery.


Normal development is a “properly synchronized succession of events,” states Liebl. “But, following insult, the fine-tuned capacities of the central nervous system are impaired.” During development, molecules known as the ephrins and Eph receptors are intimately involved with the forming of synapses and their function. Dr. Liebl is examining how ephrins and Eph receptors regulate and assist in aspects of this process, and their potential role in synaptogenesis post-TBI. In mature neurogenesis, the ephrins and Eph receptors regulate the proliferation (reproduction) and survival of stem cells and neuroblasts (cells that generate neurons). Liebl’s lab is examining the processes by which these molecules act to ensure adequate levels of both stem cells and neuroblast cells in the brain. Liebl

is also testing for a potential role for the ephrins and Eph receptors in the regulation of endogenous and transplanted cells following brain or spinal cord injury. By delineating the behaviors of normal regulatory mechanisms, Liebl may be able to effectively target and control similar processes that occur as the CNS attempts to “fix itself,” following a trauma.

Together, Drs. Bullock and Dietrich will spearhead the Miami Project and Department of Neurological Surgery’s first involvement in clinical trials for patients who have acute TBI. This fall, the University of Miami, Jackson Memorial Hospital, the Ryder Trauma Research Center and The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis are sponsoring a study that

will include 100-200 patients. Dr. Bullock, lead investigator, will test the safety and efficacy of “Oxycyte,” a perfluorocarbon that improves brain oxygenation. Oxycyte is an oxygen transport enhancer, capable of carrying four times the normal amount of oxygen than a normal human red blood cell. By introducing Oxycyte to the brain, Dr. Bullock hopes to reduce ischemic brain damage. “The biggest reason for death following brain injury is that the brain can’t get enough oxygen,” states Bullock. “If we can interrupt the cascade of cell death during the hours and days after initial brain injury, we can save someone from a lifetime of disability.” Oxycyte will also be used in SCI. Dietrich and colleagues plan to study Oxycyte’s ability to “improve oxygen flow to the compromised area in the spinal cord”. “We do so many complicated things trying to heal CNS injuries,” comments Dietrich. “At the end of the day, if tissue is starved of oxygen, it dies.”

The challenges facing people who survive a traumatic spine or brain injury are formidable. The major goal of The Miami Project is to develop new therapies to treat people with paralysis. Paralysis results from a variety of neurological problems including spinal cord injury, stroke and brain trauma. Those who study TBI at The Miami Project aim to expand the knowledge of brain and spinal cord injury and create effective research strategies for the development of clinical applications for CNS trauma.

Scientists with the Miami Project are collaborating on many exciting research projects that will provide new knowledge necessary to tackle this difficult problem. Only through a multidisciplinary approach to these complicated problems will solutions be found. 

Kids Camp



Mckayla Jones and Hayden Brinker cruise down the hallways of The Miami Project, the sparkle-wheels on their wheelchairs flashing. They are the youngest people to participate in a Miami Project research study.

Each morning, they make their way to the lab of Edelle Field-Fote, P.T., Ph.D., to be involved in a “walking-training” program, a study that examines the program’s effects on walking function, mobility, and other aims for children with incomplete spinal cord injuries.

“The walking-training program is not just a physical activity, it is training designed to improve a specific, functional task. In our study, that task is walking,” states Kathleen Manella, P.T., M.S. “If you want to change walking function, you have to practice walking on an intensive schedule. That’s the essence of task-specific training.”

“They put us in these harnesses and we walk on the treadmill... three, five, seven, minutes...not ten yet, but we will when we’re stronger,” Mckayla says. “Sometimes at the end they lift me up high –it’s like swinging,” Mckayla giggles.

Treadmill sessions are complex, and make great demands on Hayden and Mckayla as well as on their trainers. Three people work with each child at once: two to help guide the child’s legs, a third stabilizes the pelvis. Sometimes a fourth person assists with arm swinging.

Mckayla and Hayden are supported by a weight-bearing harness. “With this partial support of body weight,” their weak muscles can be more easily moved through a walking pattern.

Kathleen says that helping the children through a proper gait pattern requires the staff to focus on the *needs of each step*. A good step feels and looks like a good step.

“We can adjust the proprioceptive (or sensory) input of every step,” Kathleen explains. “By varying the amount of weight-bearing, the pressure and placement of our hands on their legs, and moving their joints through a specific range-of-motion - we modify and adjust the input they receive.”





"We try to reproduce the cycles of gait, which include timing, sequencing, and the total alignment of the trunk and legs (posture). My mind is also focusing on coordinating the actions of each lab member to produce a smooth walking pattern."

The input that Mckayla and Hayden get is not just physical; verbal *cues* are encouraging and significant: "You're standing tall! Right-Left-Right... That's a good step!"

Is it hard work? "Yes!" Sometimes the lab members tire before Hayden and Mckayla do. And everybody sweats!

Hayden feels he is improving because he can walk longer on the treadmill. He requires less assistance to support weight on his legs and can initiate the swing phase of stepping with both legs. He also likes to show off his "firmer" muscles.

Today he says, "This feels more like walking!"


Once Hayden and Mckayla finish their morning training sessions, they head out to cool off and have fun at the Shake-A-Leg summer camp program. Shake-A-Leg is an adaptive watersports center on Biscayne Bay.

Mckayla's sailing boat is named "To the Max". She's comfortable moving about in the shallow boat, shimmying forward to grab the bowline.

"It's a level playing field," Meredith, a Shake-A-Leg director smiles. "No wheelchairs necessary. When you're sailing or kayaking, a disability like Mckayla's is inconsequential."

Clockwise from top left: Hayden, Kathleen and staff work on proper stepping; Hayden digging in at Shake-a-Leg; Mckayla finds painting relaxing after her training session; Hayden takes a tricycle ride after his training session; Mckayla and Kathleen practice walking overground; Mckayla and Kathleen enjoy a break between walking trials.

Hayden sits in the bow of his kayak, handling his paddle like a pro. He cuts the water cleanly, digging deep and drawing it back.

The kids are making strides in the research study, and they're ready to "Shake-A-Leg" by noon...and, because of what we learn in research programs at The Miami Project, we hope they'll be shaking and moving their legs more and more in the coming years. 

Scientific Director W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D.



field forward,” Dietrich states. “Neurological disorders are the most complicated problems known to medical science today, and we require the best scientific minds and technology in order to find cures.”

Dr. Dietrich completed his doctoral work at the Medical College of Virginia in 1979, which remains a mecca for medical research on traumatic brain injury (TBI). Early in his training, Dietrich learned the importance of collaborative research when trying to understand and eventually treat the complex conditions caused by TBI and spinal cord injury (SCI). In the early 1980s, Dietrich began postdoctoral work at Washington University, where he and his colleagues conducted one of the first studies to demonstrate the plasticity, or flexible response, of the adult nervous system to sensory input. These early studies clearly showed that the adult nervous system is not hardwired, but has the capacity to regenerate, begin to restructure its pathways, and, most importantly, to be retrained after injury. Today, reconditioning and rehabilitation strategies for people living with paralysis are a major focus of Miami Project faculty.

In 1981, Dietrich was recruited to the University of Miami as an assistant professor of Neurology. For many years, he collaborated with a large research group to develop new treatment strategies for cerebral ischemia and stroke. He also helped design new injury models of vascular thrombosis that are used today to study brain and spinal cord injury. In 1986, Dr. Dietrich and colleagues at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine, first discovered the extraordinary benefits of using mild levels of hypothermia to save neurons from dying following a hypoxic or ischemic insult. This kind of injury typically occurs after a stroke, when the brain’s oxygen and blood supply is disrupted.

The result of these findings led to the use of mild hypothermia as a preventive measure, as well as a treatment modality for mild fever in brain-injured and spinal cord-injured patients. TBI and SCI patients are now being carefully treated and monitored in critical care units throughout the world. These findings have also led to changes in the guidelines of the American Heart Association for temperature management after cardiac arrest. “This was a ‘home run’ for our researchers, because we managed to develop a successful treatment strategy to preserve brain function after heart attack.”

As a member of the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine community, Dr. Dietrich serves on University committees, a number of grant review boards (the

In 1997, W. Dalton Dietrich accepted the position of Scientific Director at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. His goal then and now is to change the way we treat patients who have brain or spinal cord injuries. Over the past 11 years, Dr. Dietrich has worked tirelessly with Miami Project Faculty to promote the discovery of new information concerning the neurological mechanisms of cell death and repair. “It is critical that our scientists and researchers have the research infrastructure necessary to move this

National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration, the Ralph Wilson Research Foundation, and the Craig Neilsen SCI Foundation) and continues to run an active laboratory with his wife, Helen Bramlett, Ph.D. Together, they conduct cutting-edge research targeting SCI, brain trauma, stroke and cerebral ischemia.

"We find that although brain and spinal cord injuries are very different in terms of their incidence and the primary mechanisms of injury, these tissues are similar in their response to insults. The central nervous system has a limited number of possible reactions to injury; basic mechanisms that are affected involve cell death and functional abnormalities. But, each trauma creates specific

Dr. Dietrich, who is a Professor of Neurological Surgery, spends his days interacting with a large number of individuals associated with The Miami Project and the University of Miami. As Vice Chair of Research for the Department of Neurological Surgery, he interacts closely with the department's Chairman, Dr. Barth Green, regarding clinical issues and research progress. It is also not unusual for a faculty member, associate or student to knock on his door for advice or to ask a question. Dietrich's door is always open to his colleagues.

Dr. Dietrich enjoys helping to train the next generation of scientists in the area of neurologic disorders. He has mentored numerous Ph.D. students and postdoctoral fellows in his 25 years at the University of Miami, many

"I have the opportunity to interact with intelligent and talented people focusing on human neurological disorders. I learn something new everyday that may be important to our goals."

conditions. And, the findings from our research and clinical cases can frequently help in the studies of other human neurological problems."


Over the last decade the Miami Project has continued to develop its programs and has gained national and international prominence for its medical research. In 2000, The Miami Project moved into the Lois Pope LIFE Center, a state-of-the-art facility that houses researchers and medical scientists who work on neurological disorders such as SCI, stroke, brain trauma, multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer's Disease. The ability to house scientists who do basic research, clinical research and research that translates from the scientific realm to clinical care, enhances the collaborative nature of The Project. Every day, scientists entering the center encounter people using wheel chairs, participating in exercise and human lab studies. "The reality of those living with paralysis is part of our daily lives," one faculty member said. "We're not off in a lab, with no reference to what SCI really entails."

Dietrich, who is pleased by the increase in collaborative work throughout the medical center, says, "One of my favorite jobs is to provide support for new collaborations between investigators who have not had an opportunity to work together." These types of collaborations usually ask complex questions that may result in solutions to difficult problems.

of whom have become successful investigators in their respective fields. "Students and postdoctoral fellows come from all over the world to train in Miami Project laboratories, joining faculty members who are at the cutting-edge of research in the field of CNS injury and repair," Dietrich asserts. The bridge established between a mentor and new scientists often allows for future, significant exchanges.

"Each day when I go to work, I know the day will be challenging, but at the same time very interesting, and hopefully, productive. I have the opportunity to interact with intelligent and talented people focusing on human neurological disorders. I learn something new everyday that may be important to our goals."

As a scientist, Dr. Dietrich is very appreciative of The Buoniconti Fund and all of the other Miami Project supporters who dedicate their time and expertise to Miami Project programs and studies. He is also grateful for the leadership of the University of Miami, and of the Miller School of Medicine. On numerous occasions, Dr. Pascal Goldschmidt, the Medical Dean of the University of Miami, has commended The Miami Project for 'doing all that is necessary to get us across the finish line'."

"Our purpose," states Dr. Dietrich, "is to improve the lives of persons with SCI, and the lives of those living with other neurological disorders. The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis is a family, and together, we will achieve our aims." 

Appointments/Honors

Barth Green, M.D., was honored to receive the James W. McLamore Outstanding Service Award. This highest honor given by the University of Miami Faculty Senate recognizes service above and beyond the call of duty by a member of the University Community. Dr. Green's substantial contributions to research, clinical activities, and his humanitarian efforts stand as a shining example of invaluable service to the University, to our community and abroad.



Dr. Barth Green receives the James W. McLamore Outstanding Service Award

W. Dalton Dietrich, Ph.D., Miami Project Scientific Director, was named Deputy Editor for the Journal of Neurotrauma. In circulation since 1980, The Journal of Neurotrauma publishes peer-reviewed papers on the latest advances in both the laboratory and clinical investigations of traumatic brain and spinal cord injury.

Edelle Field-Fote, Ph.D., P.T., was appointed the new editor-in-chief of the Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy (JNPT), effective January 2009. The JNPT is a quarterly publication comprised of research articles, critical reviews and special interest papers that contribute to the development of theory, evidence and the effective use of physical therapy for individuals with neurologic conditions.

Nancy L. Brackett, Ph.D., HCLD, was appointed secretary/treasurer of the Society for Male Reproduction and Urology (SMRU). The society's primary mission is to promote advancement and understanding of male reproduction and the management of infertility by supporting educational programs and providing a forum for the dissemination of research information. Dr. Brackett's position automatically advances to president of SMRU in three years.

Helen M. Bramlett, Ph.D., was elected as a Counselor of the National Neurotrauma Society. This organization is committed to the promotion of neurotrauma research by enhancing communications, providing a forum, and increasing support on the national and international level.

Lectures

Mary Bartlett Bunge, Ph.D., and **John Bethea, Ph.D.**, served as mini-symposium speakers at the Society for Neuroscience meeting held in November. Dr. Bunge spoke on "Novel Combination Strategies to Repair the Injured Spinal Cord," and Dr. Bethea spoke on "The Role of Astroglial-NF-kB in Reactive Gliosis". Dr. Bunge also attended the Society for Neuroscience meeting of the Public Education and Communication Committee. She is serving as the co-chair of a sub-committee to develop cyber modules for the very unique National Health Museum that will be built in five to seven years. The museum will be unlike any other museum in the world.

Mark S. Nash, Ph.D., FACSM, has accepted an invitation to give the keynote address at the 4th International State-of-the-Art Congress, "Rehabilitation: Mobility, Exercise & Sports," to be held in Amsterdam, Holland, April 7th – 9th, 2009.

Eva Widerstrom-Noga, Ph.D., DDS, served as plenary speaker at the 15th Annual Interurban Spinal Cord Injury Conference in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. This year's theme was "Research to Reality," and was organized by Hamilton Health Sciences and McMaster University. She also attended the Veteran's Administration Pain Research Summit in Palm Springs, California, where she gave an oral presentation entitled "Imaging of Pain after SCI".

W. Dalton Dietrich, PhD., spoke at the 14th International Society for Cellular Therapy, at an NIH- sponsored workshop on Combination Therapies for Traumatic Brain Injury, at the National Thoroughbred Racing Association and at the NFL Physicians Society Meeting. In each of these lectures, he summarized the important discoveries and advances being made in the area of brain and spinal cord injury.

Grants


Congratulations to Miami Project principle investigators and students who received new grant funding for 2008 from the:

Department of Defense: Helen Bramlett, Ross Bullock and Ian Hentall
Craig H. Neilsen Foundation: Vance Lemmon, Mark Nash, Jackie Sagen, and Ian Hentall

Ralph Wilson Medical Research Foundation: Mary B. Bunge

Veteran's Administration: Eva Widerstrom-Noga

National Institutes of Health: Vance Lemmon, Edelle Field-Fote, Damien Pearse, Jacqueline Sagen, and Christine Thomas. This is exceptional news in a time when NIH funding is so difficult to obtain. Congratulations on these various achievements.

Congratulations also to Erik Runko, Ph.D., a postdoctoral associate in the laboratory of Daniel Liebl, Ph.D., who received postdoctoral awards from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation and the Paralyzed Veterans Association. 

The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis salutes

Madeleine and Micky Arison


Micky Arison is Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Carnival Corporation & plc, the world's largest cruise operator, and managing general partner of the NBA's Miami HEAT professional basketball team. Micky and Madeleine Arison take great pride in giving back to the community and are leading philanthropic contributors to a wide range of South Florida charitable organizations. The Arisons are involved in a wide range of local and national charitable and arts-related organizations, including the National Foundation for

Advancement in the Arts, and the New World Symphony, on whose board Madeleine serves. They are also very involved in causes related to the health and well-being of the general community, including medical research at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. The Arisons are actively involved with the Carnival Foundation, which coordinates corporate involvement and financial support of various educational, and social service organizations.



Both Madeleine and Micky are on the board of trustees of the Miami Children's Museum, and Madeleine serves on the board of directors of the Miami HEAT Charitable Fund, designed to raise awareness about domestic violence issues. The Arisons are long-time and generous supporters of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, a Center of Excellence at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. They recently made a very large donation to The Miami Project's Human Clinical Trials Initiative. Madeleine was also a "Woman of Substance and Style" at the Buoniconti Fund's Destination Fashion: Bal Harbour 2006. She was honored for her volunteerism and support of so many deserving charitable entities.

Since 1996, the Arisons have been members of United Way's Million Dollar Roundtable of the Alexis de Tocqueville Society. They are also members of the Guardian Angels for the Foundation that supports Jackson Memorial Hospital whose Pediatric Intensive Care Unit will now be called the Carnival Cares for Kids Center.

The Miami Project salutes Madeleine and Micky Arison for their vision in supporting the mission to cure paralysis. 

Magic Johnson, John Elway and Mark Messier

Honored at

The 22nd Annual

Great Sports Legends Dinner

The event, hosted by Tom Brokaw, also honored Kelly Slater, Gary Player, Joe Morgan, Janet Evans, Lesley Visser and Gil De Ferran, raised a record-breaking sum for The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis

Nick and Marc Buoniconti once again hosted a full house at the famed Waldorf=Astoria Hotel to support the **22nd Annual Great Sports Legends Dinner**, benefiting The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis. They were joined by sports heroes, philanthropic icons and business leaders who were out in full force. The 2007 Great Sports Legends honorees were **Earvin “Magic” Johnson, John Elway, Mark Messier, Gary Player, Kelly Slater, Joe Morgan, Janet**



The 2007 Sports Legends and Honorees



Nick Buoniconti, Kelly Slater, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Lois Pope, Marc Buoniconti

Evans, Lesley Visser and Gil De Ferran. The star-studded affair was hosted by television news legend **Tom Brokaw**, who was joined by special guest, broadcaster **Bob Costas**. The evening raised a record-breaking sum.

"Tonight was about defining moments. Each Legend here tonight has experienced their own defining moments, but tonight they are contributing to ours. We are proud to say that we are soon bringing our research to humans. We are helping people get out of wheelchairs and forever standing by their sides," said an emotional Nick Buoniconti.

The Great Sports Legends Dinner has honored a who's who of star athletes for their great athletic achievement and raised the much needed funds for spinal cord injury research programs at The Miami Project. The dinner has become known for uniting individuals from the sports, business and entertainment industries. More than 1,300 people attended this year's gala event, which honors Great Sports Legends from different athletic categories.

Other notables in attendance included NFL Hall of Fame great **Michael Irvin**; former NBA star **John Starks**; assistant NY Knicks coach **Herb Williams**; former heavyweight Champion of the World **Larry Holmes**; NFL Hall of Famer **Harry Carson**; Olympic skating champion **Dorothy Hamill**; former NY Giants linebacker **Brian Kelley**; former NFL wide receiver **Nat Moore**; and former NFL quarterback **Earl Morrall**, among others.

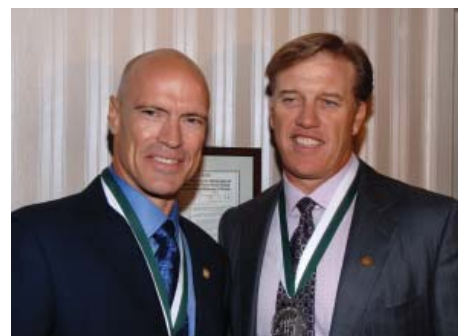
Additional highlights of the spectacular sold-out evening were the presentation of "**The Outstanding Philanthropist Award**" to Lois Pope and "**The Buoniconti Fund Award**" to **The Bantle Family**. The auction was an exciting moment with six-figure bids for more than a few dream items including the package to golf with Golf Icon Jack Nicklaus, a Super Sports Package including tickets to the Super Bowl and The Masters and an American flag that was flown over Camp Victory in Bagdad. 🇺🇸

**2008 Great Sports Legends Dinner
Monday, September 22nd.**

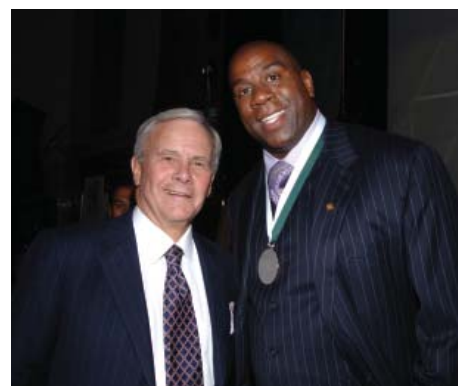
**2009 Great Sports Legends Dinner
Monday, September 21st.**



Bob Costas and Joe Morgan



Mark Messier and John Elway



Tom Brokaw and Earvin "Magic" Johnson



Gary Player

SAVE THE DATE Destination Fashion

Saturday, March 7th, 2009
at
Bal Harbour Shops

Get ready to experience the party of a lifetime as Destination Fashion 2009 returns to Bal Harbour Shops on Saturday, March 7, 2009 to benefit The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis. The 2009 Destination Fashion Honorary Chairs, Academy Award winner Tommy Lee Jones and wife, Dawn, will welcome celebrities and notables from the worlds of entertainment, sports, media and fashion for the star-studded affair. This year, a high-profile fashion designer will showcase their exclusive Spring Collection in a breathtaking fashion show presented by Saks Fifth Avenue Bal Harbour in the Destination Fashion Arena for the Runway and Couture ticketholders. Guests will witness the announcement of the 2009 Women of Substance & Style Honorees by their Celebrity Presenters. Party Ticketholders will be amazed when they feast on gourmet cuisine and enjoy unique and spectacular live interactive entertainment. All supporters will travel through Bal Harbour Shops and be dazzled as the "Decades" change from the 70's, 80's and 90's to end up in the Present Decade for a Special Concert Performance by a Celebrity Performer-last year- Queen of Disco Donna Summer brought down the house. Golf legend Jack Nicklaus will receive The Barth A. Green Spirit Award and Stanley Whitman of Bal Harbour Shops will be presented with The Buoniconti Fund Award. Get lucky and bid away on many sensational silent auction items courtesy of the Bal Harbour Shops.

To reserve your tables and tickets for this exclusive and exciting event, please call Stephanie Sayfie Aagaard at 305-243-4656 or email saagaard@miami.edu



Top row: Gloria Estefan, Dawn and Tommy Lee Jones, Marc Buoniconti, Don Shula and Tim Gannon Middle row: Donna Summer; Jack and Barbara Nicklaus Bottom row: Helio Castroneves; Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson

The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis and The Barton G. Kids Hear Now Foundation Co-host an Event to Educate and Inspire


More than 750 luminaries celebrated the Buoniconti Fund's mission to cure paralysis and the launch of the Barton G. Kids Hear Now Foundation, an organization dedicated to helping hearing-impaired children and their families find pathways to sound and speech. The Buoniconti Fund and the Kids Hear Now Foundation creator Barton G. Weiss invited these notables to hear firsthand about the need to cure paralysis and about the accessibility of cochlear implants.

Nick and Marc Buoniconti of The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis, along with Barton G. of the Kids Hear Now Foundation, co-hosted the event which raised substantial funds for the charities. The evening was filled with many heartwarming stories, moving speeches and compelling videos by The Buoniconti Fund and Weiss. Partygoers enjoyed an evening in the Design District's Palm Court - a stunningly verdant and environmentally responsible Dacra Development property, designed and built by Barton G. The breathtaking, palm-punctuated landscape glowing in the candle light, and the starlight twinkling through the transparent ceiling, set the tone for an amazing evening, which included a surprise concert by singing sensation Dionne Warwick.



Top row: Jill Viner, Barton G. Weiss, Dionne Warwick, Dr. Thomas J. Balkany, Heather Whitestone-McCallum, Robert Alpert
Middle row: Barton G. Weiss and Nick Buoniconti; Dionne Warwick
Bottom row: Marla Bergmann and Deborah Slack; Naomi Weizig and Charlie Cinnamon; Marc Buoniconti


Attendees were moved by remarks from Nick and Marc Buoniconti of The Buoniconti Fund and The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, Barton G. Weiss, Dr. Thomas J. Balkany, the world renowned authority on cochlear implant technology who serves as the foundation's medical expert, and Heather Whitestone-McCallum, the first deaf Miss America who now hears with cochlear implants.

The recurring theme of the evening was to inform all in attendance about the need for the work of the presenting organizations. Both organizations were created by fathers who, because of their own child's health crisis, wanted to help create better lives for those facing similar situations. 

Jack Nicklaus and The Bear's Club

Host the 6th Annual Buoniconti Fund Celebrity Golf Invitational



Golfing legend Jack Nicklaus, a true winner in golf and life, continues to champion our cause. This past November, he hosted the 6th Annual Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis Invitational at his exclusive home course, The Bear's Club in Jupiter, Florida, to help raise much-needed dollars for The Miami Project's spinal cord injury research programs. Celebrity friends, including NFL Hall of Famers Nick Buoniconti, Don Shula, Lawrence Taylor and Bob Griese, NBA Hall of Famers John Havlicek and KC Jones and 1980 Olympic Gold Medal Hockey Team Captain Mike Eruzione (to name a few), teed off with our supporters on the extraordinary course for a beautiful day filled with on-course contests, an awards ceremony and luncheon. James Ferraro, this year's presenting sponsor and a Buoniconti Fund Board Member, helped make this tournament a huge success. 

**Save the Date for the 2008
tournament: December 7th and 8th.**



Jim Ferraro, Marc Buoniconti, Nick Buoniconti, Jack Nicklaus



Joe Namath, Rusty Staub, Jack Nicklaus and Nick Buoniconti

\$1,000,000 Raised by Paralyzed Horse Trainer


"She is truly our shining star and an example of how much one determined individual can do to make a huge difference in the lives of so many."

Assistant horse trainer Robin Cleary, who was paralyzed in a horse training accident at Calder Racecourse in 1996, celebrated at Calder's Turf Club for raising more than \$1 million for The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis' spinal cord injury research programs. The 1996 injury left Cleary a quadriplegic, unable to move from the neck down, but each day she inspires others to help change medical history for her and others living with paralysis.

"What Robin has done is simply amazing. I know of no other individual who has led such a grass roots effort to raise money for any charity. She is truly our shining star and an example of how much one determined individual can do to make a huge difference in the lives of so many," said Miami Project President Marc Buoniconti.

Calder presented the check that officially put her over the \$1 million mark. Robin and her husband Brian still train horses together but Robin also spends time sharing her story of hope and asking others to believe that a cure for paralysis is not only possible, but within reach at The Miami Project. Robin's fundraising has come from the horse racing community. She personally reaches out to everyone she can in the industry including farm owners, race track executives, horse related associations, sales companies, trainers, owners, jockeys, grooms, exercise riders and hot walkers. They have all responded, coming together for a common cause.

Robin said, "Each year I continue to try and expand my efforts and reach. I am so fortunate that the horse community, full of so many giving people, answered the call these past ten years. I never thought it possible to raise the kind of money I have when I started. I'm humbled by their generosity and fortunate to have many dedicated and generous donors and friends who have given me the opportunity to help fund this research and be a part of finding a cure."

In early 1998, Cleary learned of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. Since The Miami Project is the world's largest organization working to find a cure for paralysis, Cleary decided that she needed to do what she could to help. In 2000, her efforts became so successful that The Miami Project named a special fund in recognition of her efforts; the Robin Cleary Paralysis Research Fund at The Miami Project. One hundred percent of the money she raises goes directly to spinal cord regeneration research programs, which are some of the most promising areas of research in the field. The Miami Project, located at the University of Miami's Miller School of Medicine, is now embarking on a Human Clinical Trials Initiative to fast-track promising research to the clinics and hospitals and Robin's fundraising is making a big impact in helping to fund the research. 



Top row: Brian and Robin Cleary with Gloria Estefan Second row: Marc and Nick with Robin Third row: Dr. Barth Green, Michelle Blanco, Robin and Bonnie Mandich Bottom Row: Robin receiving a check from Calder Race Course

4th Annual South Florida Buoniconti Fund Golf Invitational



Swanee and Paul DiMare with Marc Buoniconti

Celebrities and golfers teed off on the magnificent Indian Creek Country Club golf course at the 4th Annual South Florida Buoniconti Fund Golf Invitational on Friday, April 25, 2008 to benefit The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis. Event Presenting Sponsors Swanee and Paul DiMare welcomed guests as they feasted on

the Champions Brunch followed by a dazzling day of golf complete with on-course contests and the chance to go home with a Williamson Cadillac Hummer. Celebs including NFL's Winningest Coach Don Shula, Lawrence Taylor and Bob Griese (to name a few), mingled with the guests and Coach even stood up and praised Nick and Marc Buoniconti for the terrific achievements they have made with The Miami Project. All ended the day with a celebratory awards ceremony dinner and buy-it-now auction. Don't miss out; save the date for the 5th Annual South Florida Buoniconti Fund Golf Invitational on Friday, April 24th, 2009.



Dr. Barth Green, Don Shula and Nick Buoniconti

NORDSTROM AVENTURA MALL OPENING GALA

Seattle-based Nordstrom, Inc., one of the nation's leading fashion specialty retailers, kicked off the opening of its third Miami-area store at Aventura Mall with an evening gala on Wednesday, February 13, 2008. The event, entirely underwritten by Nordstrom, helped raise funds for The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis/The Miami Project at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine among other local charities.

A crowd of more than 1,700 guests were the first to preview the new Nordstrom store while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, buffets and live entertainment throughout the two-levels. The highlight of the gala was two full-scale, theatrical runway fashion shows staged in a specially constructed hangar-size tent adjacent to the store.

Buoniconti Fund Co-chairs for the evening were Pennie and Gary Abramson, Marc A. Buoniconti, Nick Buoniconti, and Barth A. Green, M.D.



Pete Nordstrom, President of Nordstrom Merchandising, Blake Nordstrom, President of Nordstrom, Inc., Jamie Nordstrom, President of Nordstrom Direct

The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis honors

James Ferraro

Ferraro's generous donation to The Buoniconti Fund will support the Human Clinical Trials Initiative at The Miami Project



Sergio Gonzalez, Dr. Pascal Goldschmidt, James Ferraro, Dr. Barth Green, Marc Buoniconti, Nick Buoniconti, Dr. Mary Bunge and Dr. Damien Pearse




Mike Piazza, James Ferraro, Alicia Rickter, Sergio Gonzalez, Tico Torres and Bernie Kosar



James Ferraro and his wife Patricia with family and friends

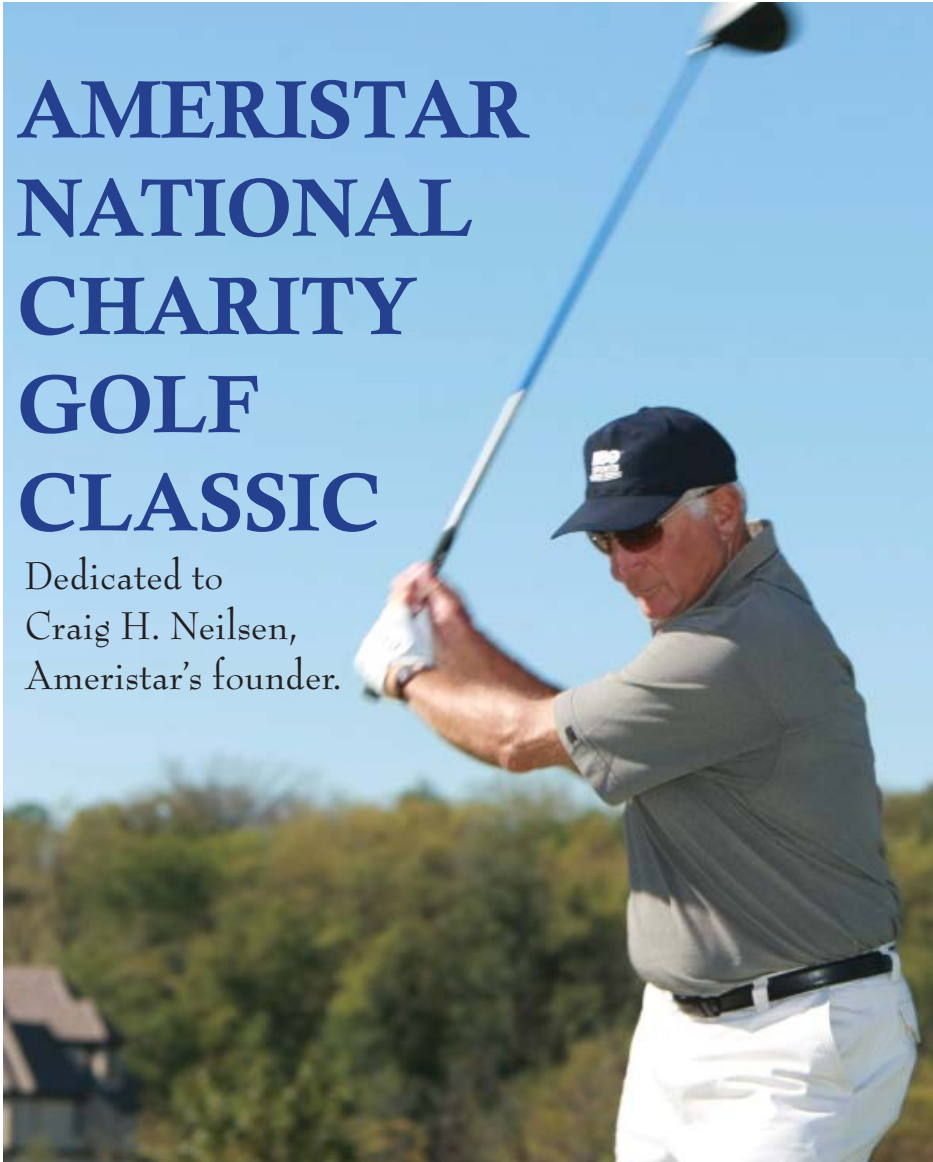


Marc Buoniconti with James Ferraro

Buoniconti Fund Board Member, renowned attorney and South Florida Philanthropist, James Ferraro was recently honored by The Buoniconti Fund, the national fundraising arm of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. Over two hundred University of Miami dignitaries, celebrities, friends and family members attended the celebratory dinner at the Lois Pope LIFE Center. Ferraro's long time support of The Buoniconti Fund has allowed many cutting edge scientific research programs to be conducted. Ferraro's focus is now directed to the Human Clinical Trials Initiative. He was also the Presenting Sponsor of the Buoniconti Fund Celebrity Golf Invitational with Jack Nicklaus at The Bear's Club. The Buoniconti Fund salutes James Ferraro for his continuing work and dedication to the mission to cure paralysis. 

AMERISTAR NATIONAL CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC

Dedicated to
Craig H. Neilsen,
Ameristar's founder.




life, and it is that spirit that motivates us to continue his mission with this third annual golf classic."

The Ameristar National Charity Golf Classic is the most successful golf tournament in Kansas City.

The money raised through the tournament has been invested in 12 research grants. Some of them are working diligently in basic science to regenerate the spinal cord while others are attempting to improve rehabilitation techniques.



Nick and Marc with Ray Neilsen

"I'm thrilled and humbled that we've been so successful in just three years," said Marc Buoniconti. "This achievement is a testament to Ameristar Casinos and their business partners, who understand the profound contribution this research makes to the many people whose everyday lives are impacted by spinal cord injuries." 

This year's tournament will move to Ameristar's St. Louis property and promises to break all previous records. It is scheduled for October 6th and 7th, 2008.

The third annual Ameristar National Charity Golf Classic, which is hosted by Ameristar Casinos, Inc. was held Oct. 9, 2007 at The National Golf Club of Kansas City, and raised important funds to benefit The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis.

Ameristar Casinos, which operates eight properties in seven markets across the United States, began presenting the Ameristar National Charity Golf Classic in 2005 to provide its key business partners with an opportunity to make a significant contribution toward spinal cord injury

research. The 2007 tournament was dedicated to the late Craig H. Neilsen, Ameristar's founder, who created the event in the belief innovative scientific research will find a cure for spinal cord injuries.

"During my career I have met many people who are committed to social responsibility and community service," said Ameristar CEO John Boushy. "But few have had the passion or devoted their time, talent and resources to a cause like our founder, Craig Neilsen, did. Craig was driven to help people with spinal cord injuries live a better

Music for Mobility

Emma and Grace Verrill aren't your average sisters. Their sisterly bond grew stronger in 2003 when Emma was a high school sophomore in Maine. While undergoing corrective back surgery, Emma sustained a spinal cord injury resulting in paralysis at the thoracic 6 (t-6) level. After spending months away from home in New York and Boston in rehabilitation hospitals, Emma found it to be a difficult transition going home. Her family, friends, and in particular her sister Grace helped her through the challenging times.

Emma's family later learned of The Miami Project and met with Dr. Green in December of 2004, just a year after her surgery. What she found in Miami was kindness, positive attitudes and many people who were facing the same things she was with her paralysis.

In 2008 the younger Grace was wrapping up her senior year in high school. As a senior community service project, she couldn't think of a better thing to do than try and help her sister Emma, raise awareness of those living with paralysis. She paired with her best friend and fellow senior Ashley Allen (half of the signing Allen Sisters) to put on a benefit concert, called Music for Mobility, to raise money for The Miami Project and entertain the community.



Ashley Allen with Emma and Grace Verrill

The concert was held on May 18th in Portland, Maine and was a resounding success. The girls were able to entertain hundreds of people who attended and also show that a lot of determination can yield amazing results.



Jake and Elwood Blues flank Marc Buoniconti

Judy Belushi and The Blues Brothers - A Special Miami Beach Concert Event

Celebration of The Sea Music & Film Festival teamed up with The Miami Beach Polo World Cup on Saturday, April 26, 2008 to present The Blues Brothers for a special Miami Beach Concert Performance. Patrons enjoyed a "VIP Cocktail Reception" including a beach-side Fashion Show and a silent auction to benefit The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis. The reception was held in The Miami Beach Polo World Cup VIP Tent on the Beach. The Blues Brothers then performed a concert on the beach followed by a VIP dinner at The Setai. Special guests included **Judy Belushi Pisano** - widow of acclaimed *Saturday Night Live* Star and Blues Brothers co-creator **John Belushi**, **Jake and Elwood Blues** - "The Blues Brothers", **Nick and Marc Buoniconti** and Buoniconti Fund Board Member **James Ferraro**, President and Founder of The Ferraro Foundation.

"Friday Night Lights"

Actors Kyle Chandler and Brad Leland of the critically acclaimed NBC television series "Friday Night Lights" hosted the Beyond the Lights Celebrity Golf Classic, Friday, March 7, 2008, outside of Austin, Texas.

The catalyst for creating this annual tournament comes directly from Kyle and Brad's work on the show. In the first episode, which was inspired by actual on-field events, high school football coach, Eric Taylor and his team, family, and community, witness a tragic football accident – the life-altering spinal cord injury suffered by his star QB. Chandler and Leland became passionate about those living with paralysis through personal research, their characters' onscreen development and by getting to know and work with actors with real-life spinal cord injuries on the show.



Friday Night Lights actors Kyle Chandler and Brad Leland

Actors from the "Friday Night Lights" series and motion picture as well as musicians, sports and entertainment celebrities participated in this first year event benefiting The Buoniconti Fund to Cure Paralysis and a Texas charity.

A full day of golf followed by a silent auction, dinner, and concert by the popular band Lonestar, raised money for the two charities.

Plans are underway for the 2nd annual Beyond the Lights Golf Classic in March, 2009.

The Buoniconti Fund National Chapters Spring 08

The Buoniconti Fund's National Chapters are moving into Spring/Summer 2008 with great momentum and success. We have raised more than \$500,000 since June 2007, and re-chartered two Chapters in Northern New Jersey and Palm Beach County.

Let us know if your city could benefit from a dedicated Chapter. Volunteers are encouraged to develop fundraising events and awareness campaigns in their communities to help us reach our goal of finding a cure for paralysis. Send an email to bfchapters@med.miami.edu or contact Kristin Wherry, Director of National Chapters, at (305) 243-3863.

Chapter highlights of note include: The "Marc A. Buoniconti Golf & Tailgate Weekend" in Charleston featured a first annual golf tournament and second annual tailgate party attended by former team, schoolmates, and family. Proceeds of more than \$50,000 benefited The Buoniconti Fund and The Citadel's Brigadier Foundation. *Mark your Calendar for October 10-11, 2008!*



Marc Buoniconti surrounded by teammates and friends Mike Kissenberth, Herman Jacobs, Matt Larkin and Kevin Dufford.



Atlanta Golf Classic led by Volunteer Regional Director Joel Thompson.

Event committee member Senator Christine Tartaglione presented Sally and Steve Woolf with an award of recognition from the Senate Office of the State of Pennsylvania for their humanitarian work to support The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis. The Senator also visited The Miami Project in February to tour the facility and participate in a \$25,000 check presentation.

The 5th Annual "Raise A Glass For A Cure" event is scheduled for November 20 at the Phillies' Park.

Please visit www.thebuonicontifund.com Events Calendar for the latest events and news in your area.



Senator of Pennsylvania Christine Tartaglione with Sally and Steve Woolf

CHAPTERS EVENT CALENDAR Summer/ Fall 2008

August 14-17 - Chapters Summit 2008 at The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis

September 12 - Orlando Chapter's That 70's Party at Church Street Station

September 14 - Baltimore Chapter's "4th Annual Crabfeast" at Carroll County Farm Museum

October 10-11 - Charleston Chapter's "Golf & Tailgate Weekend"

October 19 - Southeast Michigan Chapter's Detroit Marathon

November 20 - Philadelphia Chapter's "5th Annual Raise A Glass" at Phillies' Citizen Bank Park

November 22 - Pittsburgh Chapter's Night at the Races at Alpine Lodge

December 4 - Chicago Chapter's "10th Annual Indulgence Night" at Sofitel Water Tower Hotel

December 6 - Tampa Chapter's Golf Tournament at Westchase

Help Cure Paralysis Now through a Charitable Lead Trust

Did you know that making a gift to The Miami Project and preserving your assets for yourself or your beneficiaries is not necessarily an either/or proposition? With careful planning, you can accomplish more than one objective through the use of a Charitable Lead Trust (CLT). A CLT is a powerful financial tool that can allow you to make a future transfer of assets to yourself or your heirs at a significantly reduced gift and estate tax cost, while also providing The Miami Project with current income. Unlike a charitable remainder trust, which takes care of specified beneficiaries first, leaving the remainder to charity, a CLT takes care of the charity first for a specified term of years, with the trust principal eventually going back to you or to specified beneficiaries.

A CLT can be set up either during your lifetime or through your will. To create one, you irrevocably transfer assets (appreciating assets are often a wise choice) to a trustee you name, for example, the University of Miami. During the trust's term, typically 10-20 years, the University would invest the trust's assets and provide a fixed dollar amount each year to The Miami Project. When the trust term ends, the trust distributes all of the assets, and any growth realized, to you or your heirs. You receive a federal estate tax deduction equal to the estimated value of the annual trust payments




to The Miami Project. Moreover, any appreciation in the assets during the term of the trust is not subject to additional estate tax. As a result, you are often able to reduce your taxable estate and pass on to your heirs a larger portion of your assets.

The following is an example of the benefits of a CLT:

Mr. Reynolds is using a charitable lead trust to achieve two important objectives: to fund ground-breaking research at The Miami Project in honor of his brother, who became a paraplegic in a car accident when he was young, and to transfer income-producing property to his sons. To accomplish his objectives, Mr. Reynolds places a commercial rental property he owns, valued at \$1.5 million, into a CLT for 20 years, which will produce annual income for The Miami Project of approximately \$90,000 (6%). He will receive a gift tax deduction of \$922,770. The income stream to The Miami Project totals \$1,800,000 and will be used annually to support the research Mr. Reynolds wants to fund in honor of his

brother. Assuming that the property will appreciate in value at the rate of about 3% per year, the value of the assets in the trust will increase to \$2,709,167 over 20 years. Therefore, considering both the gift to The Miami Project and the asset that he is able to then transfer to his sons, Mr. Reynolds has achieved more than \$4.5 million in benefits to The Miami Project and his family by arranging the lead trust with an asset originally valued at \$1.5 million.

A CLT can thus be a wonderful way to help The Miami Project find a cure for paralysis now and to create a lasting legacy, while at the same time reaping financial benefits by minimizing your tax liability and preserving your wealth for retirement or for future generations. Before creating a CLT, however, it is important to seek the advice of a professional advisor, as the benefits of a particular planned giving vehicle vary based on personal circumstances. For further information and/or a personal illustration of the benefits of a CLT, please contact Megan S. Hess at (305) 243-7159 or mhess@med.miami.edu. 

Launching Our New Websites

The Miami Project and The Buoniconti Fund have embarked on a new, innovative website presence. Our new highly interactive websites will show our constituents and new visitors that we have a website that matches the organizations' status. Our visitors will become part of our community and feel welcome.

To this end, we have partnered with Blackbaud Corporation to include NetCommunity into our family of fundraising programs. Blackbaud's Net Community is a fully integrated website management program which allows our visitors to have a more personalized, targeted information session. Users will enjoy the convenience of self-service options including profile updates, research participant intake forms, online donations, sponsorships, event registrations and more.

The new websites will provide a more user friendly environment for information about the research ongoing at The Miami Project, tools and resources for those in the



spinal cord injured community, allow for detailed search results, upcoming events, lectures and more.

We truly hope you enjoy your new web experience with The Miami Project (www.themiamiproject.org) and The Buoniconti Fund (www.thebuonicontifund.com).

UPCOMING EVENTS To Benefit THE BUONICONTI FUND TO CURE PARALYSIS

*The fundraising arm of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis
Housed in the Lois Pope LIFE Center
Located at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine*

Monday, September 22, 2008 **Twenty-Third Annual Great Sports Legends Dinner**

Waldorf=Astoria Hotel
New York, New York

Wednesday, October 22, 2008 **Destination Fashion: 70's, 80's, 90's and Today, Kick Off**

Kick-Off Brunch
Lois Pope LIFE Center, The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis Building
Miami, Florida

Sunday, December 7 - Monday, December 8, 2008 **Seventh Annual Buoniconti Fund Celebrity Golf Invitational**

Jack Nicklaus' The Bear's Club
Jupiter, Florida

Saturday, March 7, 2009 **Destination Fashion: 70's, 80's, 90's and Today**

Star-Studded Dinner, Celebrity Concert and Designer Fashion Show
Bal Harbour Shops
Bal Harbour, Florida

Monday, September 21, 2009 **Twenty-Fourth Annual Great Sports Legends Dinner**

Waldorf=Astoria Hotel
New York, New York

For more information, please contact Stephanie Sayfie Aagaard at 305-243-4656 or saagaard@miami.edu.

The Miami Project and Buoniconti Fund
mourn the loss of Buoniconti Fund board
member and benefactor

Roger King

"King's GENEROSITY was EVEN
LARGER than his success in
business."



The longtime friend and television innovator was the driving force behind King World Productions and was a major CBS television executive. He helped bring Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy to the world and made household names out of Oprah Winfrey, Alex Trebek and Dr. Phil McGraw to name a few.

King's generosity was even larger than his success in business. Through personal donations and spearheading fundraisers for The Miami Project and Buoniconti Fund including the Schwarzkopf Cup and the Roger King Invitational in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, he helped raise millions for the important research programs at The Miami Project.

At the time of his death King was chief executive officer of CBS Television Distribution. He joined the network in 2000 when his groundbreaking company, King World Productions, merged with CBS.

"Television has lost a legend, a truly original executive with an unparalleled combination of business acumen, passion and personality. CBS has lost a colleague and a good friend," CBS President and CEO Leslie Moonves said in a statement. "It's a very sad day for CBS and for all of broadcasting."

Under King's guidance, King World became the industry's leading distributor of first-run, syndicated programming, bringing such shows to television as The Oprah Winfrey Show and Dr. Phil. He also launched the long-running syndicated news magazine Inside Edition.


"Roger was the best sales executive this industry has ever known," Winfrey said in a statement supplied by CBS. "I will never forget what he did for me. And this industry will never forget his legendary presence."

The King-syndicated Wheel of Fortune introduced the public to host Pat Sajak and letter turner Vanna White. CBS said it has been television's No. 1 syndicated show for the last 23 years. The King-syndicated version of Jeopardy!, with Trebek as host, has ranked among television's top three syndicated shows for 22 years.

"His passing has left a huge void in the lives of all of us fortunate enough to have known his love of life, generous spirit and commitment to a cure for paralysis. There will never ever be another Roger King!" Nick Buoniconti said.

CBS said King was responsible for the syndicated sale of reruns of several network prime-time shows, including Everybody Loves Raymond, CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, and reality shows including Survivor, The Amazing Race, and America's Top Model.

Before becoming chairman of the board of King World in 1977, King worked in newspaper sales, radio and television. His father, Charles King, founded King World in 1964.

King was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame in 1992 and the National Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 2004. 



Put
yourself
in my
shoes

and you will
know the
need to
fund a cure

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