

A Letter from the Executive Director



October 1, 2019

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the 2019 Annual Appeal: Join Our Journey—Better Treatments!

Thank you for being part of the vasculitis community. Our generous supporters have contributed to the success of many projects, including a major milestone—we funded our 50th research study this year!

We must continue the momentum. I am asking you to please make an investment toward research for better, smarter treatments.

I'd like to tell you a story about a couple I met at the 2019 International Vasculitis Symposium, hosted by the Vasculitis Foundation (VF) in July. In 2018, Sam and Helen Dodge embarked on the trip of a lifetime, planning to live on a barge and cruise the canals of England for six months. But on Day 1 in England, Sam developed crushing fatigue and other symptoms that sent him on a different journey—a medical quest that resulted in a diagnosis of microscopic polyangiitis (MPA).

"Sometimes I feel as if we are living a slow-motion British murder mystery, and we patients are the potential victims," says Sam. "The good news is that the researchers, clinics and the doctors are the detectives. And there is a worldwide team of brilliant people interested in us and looking after us."

And Sam is right about that. Vasculitis researchers around the world are, in fact, working to find better treatments and, ultimately, a cure for this disease.

But research takes funding, and that's why I'm writing to you today. This month, we are launching the second pillar of our three-year Join Our Journey campaign, with a focus on better treatments. The first year's theme was early diagnosis; next year's focus is better quality of life.

Will you join us on this journey and help fund the progress?

Dr. Peter Grayson, head vasculitis researcher at NIH/NIAMS, and member of the VF Board of Directors and VF Research Committee, puts it this way:

"We're at this point now where we not only need better treatments, but we need smarter treatments. We're trying to learn how to be more precise."

In addition to helping fund research, **your dollars are needed to support two other important initiatives.** There is a critical need for a stakeholder's summit to identify the barriers and challenges in researching the rarer forms of vasculitis. We plan to bring together scientists, clinicians, pharmaceutical partners, government agencies, patient advocacy groups, and the most important voice—the patient. This summit will be made possible with gifts like yours.



Sam Dodge
Patient with MPA



Peter Grayson, MD
NIH/NIAMS

Another initiative is translating our educational materials into other languages. As an international organization, we are a leading resource for trusted information around the globe, but we need funds to make this information accessible.

Would you consider a gift of at least \$50? With the funds received in the coming weeks, we will set the agenda for how much we can achieve in 2020.

Please join us in creating a brighter future for family and friends living with vasculitis, by giving online today at: vasculitisfoundation.org/annual-appeal-2019/.

Appreciatively,



Joyce A. Kullman
Executive Director



P.S. Sam and Helen were among 325 attendees at this year's symposium—another event made possible by sponsors and your generous donations. To see photos, videos and other highlights of the event, please visit vasculitisfoundation.org. And please make a difference by donating today!