



# BLAZEMAN FOUNDATION FOR ALS

## So Others May Live



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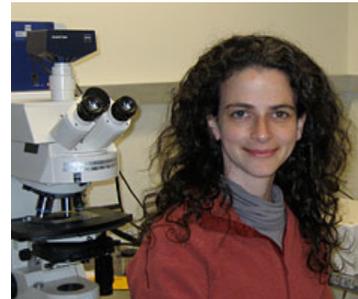
### THE BLAZEMAN FOUNDATION FOR ALS ANNOUNCES TWO RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

*Brandeis University and Wake Forest University Health Sciences become the fourth and fifth research projects funded by the Foundation.*

(Seekonk, Massachusetts, May 23, 2013) The Blazeman Foundation for ALS announced today new research partnerships with Brandeis University and Wake Forest University Health Sciences, the fourth and fifth such projects funded by the Foundation since its inception in 2007. Robert Blais, President of the Blazeman Foundation commenting on the announcement said, “We are delighted that our foundation continues to move forward amidst challenging times for nonprofits. Our ability to continue funding research projects of this scale is proof that our mission has never been more relevant or more important. Until there is a cure for ALS, research will be our most powerful weapon in the war against this disease.”

#### **Brandeis University**

The Foundation is funding a “Blazeman Foundation for ALS Postdoctoral Fellow” at Brandeis University who will conduct a research study on “Manipulation of Membrane Traffic in ALS,” under the direction of Avital (“Avi”) Rodal, Ph.D. (Bio: <http://bit.ly/11UN7M7>) Avi and her team will be taking a unique approach based on observation and manipulation of genetic and neurological pathways within fruit flies. They have developed microscopy approaches to directly visualize the movements of survival-promoting factors in neurons in fruit fly models of ALS. The benefit to studying fruit flies is their extremely fast (about 2 week) lifecycle. By studying fruit flies, their team can look at many generations in an extremely short period of time.



#### **Wake Forest University Health Sciences**

The Foundation is also funding a research study at Wake Forest University Health Sciences entitled “Administration of Hsp70 Maintains Muscle Innervation in the SOD1 Mouse - A New Therapeutic



Approach?” under the direction of (Bio: <http://bit.ly/1655kb6>) Carolanne (“Carol”) Milligan, Ph.D. Professor, Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy and director of the Translational Science Unit at the ALS Center at Wake Forest School of Medicine. This research study is working to better understand how nerves and muscles communicate and interrelate at the cellular level at points of stress. The team will investigate the role of heat shock proteins (Hsp70) to help better understand how nerves and muscles interact in ALS and also how the disease progresses. By understanding this, we can better understand and develop treatments in the battle against this disease.

Also commenting on this announcement is Mary Ann Blais, the Foundation’s Vice-President who said, “Both Avi and Carol bring more than just scientific intellect to these projects. They are clearly passionate about the work they do and we are excited to harness that level of energy and enthusiasm. They both share an excitement of discovery and the goal to have a significant impact on human health.”

### **The Role of Research in Fighting ALS**

Today, there is no cure available and only one treatment option that has not shown to be clinically significant in slowing the progress of this neurodegenerative disease in its early stages. ALS patients and their families are denied battle tools similar to those offered to patients with cancer or heart disease. But beyond the limits of today is the promise of tomorrow. The promise of significant disease treatments for those affected by ALS lies at the heart of academic medical centers such as Brandies and Wake Forest-by funding medical research, so that others may live longer, healthier lives.

Both projects will be closely monitored by the Foundation to ensure that they are proceeding as outlined in the grant agreements. Additional information about the project scope and future updates can be found online at [http://waronals.com/bmf\\_research.php](http://waronals.com/bmf_research.php)

### **About the Blazeman Foundation**

The Blazeman Foundation for ALS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. It is a family foundation that serves to carry out the vision of its namesake and founder, the late Jonathan "Blazeman" Blais. Contributions to the foundation are tax deductible. The mission of the Blazeman Foundation for ALS is 1) to raise awareness about ALS by leveraging the energy, commitment and compassion of the multi-sport community and 2) to raise necessary funds to be directed into cutting-edge scientific research to find treatments and an eventual cure for ALS...So Others May Live. On the web at [www.waronals.com](http://www.waronals.com).