



Dear Friends and Supporters,

This is an exciting time for the Nancy R. Gelman Foundation. We try not to send out many mailings, both to keep our administrative costs down and because your time is valuable, but we've got plenty of news to share.

First, a word about what NRGF has been up to. As many of you know, we had a very successful Family Fitness Walk/Run last September. Over 90 runners and supporters joined forces for our 5K at Ringwood State Park in Ringwood, NJ. This event raised over \$20,000 for breast cancer research and awareness, and we again thank last year's participants and volunteers. We also raised significant amounts through a dinner dance fund-raiser in Madison, WI, and from other donations including national give-at-work programs.

We've already put a large chunk of that money to work. This past January, we made our first grant of \$25,000 to the Cancer Center at Hackensack University Medical Center. HUMC's Cancer Center is the largest in New Jersey and a nationally recognized Community Clinical Oncology Program, and their doctors see roughly 150 new breast cancer patients each week. Some of you will recognize HUMC as the hospital where my mother was treated for her breast cancer recurrence, and although we're proud to recognize their first-rate medical staff and the excellent care she received there, this donation has a specific, targeted purpose.

As those of you who knew her can attest, my mother was a fighter, and one of her largest frustrations was the difficulty she had navigating the red tape to participate in clinical trials of new cancer therapies. During her last few months, she was finally enrolled in a trial of monoclonal antibodies (a promising immune-system therapy), but only after months of effort and several denied opportunities. I sometimes wonder whether her quality of life could have been improved by earlier or faster access to trials.

As I've learned in the course of my medical studies, survival rates for childhood cancer are significantly higher than those for adult cancers. A big reason for this is that almost all children with cancer are enrolled in clinical trials. There are large, cooperative national groups that coordinate their efforts in order to, as a current catch phrase has it, leave no child behind. As a result, new therapies can be developed, compared, and refined much more quickly for childhood cancers. On the other hand, only 3% of adult cancer patients nationwide are enrolled in clinical trials.

The past few years have seen amazing advances in laboratory science, some of which I've witnessed during my Ph.D. studies. Especially in New Jersey, a hotbed for pharmaceutical research and development, promising new therapies are constantly being developed. The bottleneck in the process,

however, is solid clinical research. Some projects are funded by industry, and some by the federal government, but they all depend on having a solid, robust research infrastructure that can admit patients into clinical trials and manage the “nuts and bolts” of conducting clinical research.

Our recent grant is targeted to improving the clinical research infrastructure at HUMC’s Cancer Center. Our dollars support the work of those dedicated professionals who are the unsung heroes of medical research, because without them there would be no possibility of progress. Just a few weeks ago, I received the first interim statistics from Dr. Andrew Pecora, MD, FACP, the chairman and director of the Cancer Center (and my mother’s treating physician). Already, with our assistance, the Cancer Center has raised their clinical trial participation average to 8% of patients. With our continued support, they are on track to reach their goal of 50% participation within five years.

We’ve been busy with some other things as well this year; as you can see, we’ve redesigned our logo and stationery, and we’ve got a new website with a shorter domain name: [www.nrgf.org](http://www.nrgf.org). We invite you to check in often for the first word on new NRGF projects.

But before the future, the present. With the incredible success of last year’s Walk/Run, there was no doubt that it would happen again this year. The HUMC Foundation, with help from my father, has agreed to take on most of the organizing responsibilities this year, and we are proud to announce that 100% of the proceeds from this year’s Walk/Run will go directly to the Cancer Center. This year’s Walk/Run is Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, once again at Ringwood State Park, and you may already have received their Save the Date mailing and registration form; many thanks and much appreciation to those who have already registered. In recognition of the stellar performance of the HUMC team of physicians, nurses, and support staff that came out for last year’s Walk/Run, NRGF is returning the favor by fielding our own team for this year’s Walk/Run.

We’ve also made it easier than ever to register for the Walk/Run. There’s an Internet form on our new website, [www.nrgf.org](http://www.nrgf.org), which will allow you to pay your registration fee directly by credit card or by mailed check. Either way, 100% of your registration fee, and any additional amount you care to give, will go directly to HUMC. And not only will you get the official Walk/Run T-shirt (and a sweatshirt for those who raise \$300 or more in pledges), but as our thanks for being part of the NRGF team, you’ll receive an additional team T-shirt. If you have already signed up for the Walk/Run by responding to the first mailing, you can go to [www.nrgf.org](http://www.nrgf.org) to register as part of the NRGF team. There is no additional donation necessary to join the NRGF team.

You’ll also have the opportunity to donate to the NRGF Endowment, which will fund both current and future projects. As participation in clinical research at HUMC grows, we plan to help other cancer centers around the country duplicate their results. Together, we can live up to the challenge of excellence in breast cancer research, and develop new therapies to cure breast cancer.

Very truly yours,  


Michael A. Gelman, Ph.D.  
President, The Nancy R. Gelman Foundation, Inc.