



TONY LAFORET VITAL STATISTICS

Here's a little about this committed MS advocate

OCCUPATION: Union plumber pipefitter by trade (Local 525, Las Vegas), currently on disability.

VOLUNTEER WORK: Built and donated a poker table for the inaugural Gala and Pro-Celebrity Poker Challenge for The Montel Williams MS Foundation in March, 2008.

RESIDENCE: North Olmsted, Ohio

HOBBY: Making rocking chairs, toy boxes and Christmas ornaments, spending time on the computer, drawing and reading.

DIAGNOSED WITH MS: February 1999

MOTTO ... "Always Try"



TONY LAFORET is one of the many committed donors worldwide who uses his talents to help fund MS research.



JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST MS

331 West 57 Street, PMB 420 New York, NY 10019

New phone number: 212 455 9376

info@montelms.org www.montelms.org

**We've disbursed \$1.5 million in grants
because of your
UNWAVERING SUPPORT.**

We'll continue to do this and much more because of you.

NEW GRANTS

The following grants totaling \$325,000 were made in June 2008

- 1. Stony Brook University Medical Center, Stony Brook, NY**—Principal Investigator, Lauren B. Krupp, M.D. **Amount Granted: \$35,000**
Project: Biomarkers in the early detection of MS.
Summary: The goals are to identify biological markers that should enable earlier and more accurate diagnoses of MS.
- 2. Johns Hopkins School of Medicine**—Principal Investigator, Benjamin Greenberg, M.D., M.H.S. **Amount Granted: \$40,000**
Project: The Impact of Vitamin D Replacement on Immunologic Markers in MS.
Summary: This project will investigate the link between lack of Vitamin D and MS, which is more prevalent in regions where there is less sun.
- 3. University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA**—Principal Investigator, Jonathan Kipnis, Ph.D. **Amount Granted: \$60,000**
Project: Development of a New Treatment Regimen for Copaxone® in Relapsing/Remitting EAE.
Summary: This study will develop a new treatment regimen for Copaxone®, a drug commonly used to manage Relapsing/Remitting MS.
- 4. University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ), Newark, NJ**—Principal Investigator, Christine Rohowsky-Kochan, M.D. **Amount Granted: \$50,000**
Project: Treg-Th17 Axis in Multiple Sclerosis.
Summary: The goal is to identify the T cells and cytokines that are critical in the immune-related damage in MS and to identify new targets for therapeutic intervention.
- 5. EpiVax Inc., Providence, RI**—Principal Investigator, Anne Searls DeGroot, M.D. **Amount Granted: \$35,000**
Project: Development of a Novel “Natural” Regulatory T cell Therapy for MS.
Summary: Epivax will apply its own novel finding of “Tregitopes”—a set of protein sequences—to find ways to restore immunological control. The study is expected to result in a Tregitope-based therapy.
- 6. Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden** Principal Investigator, Lou Brundin, M.D., Ph.D. **Amount Granted: \$45,000**
Project: Neural Stem Cells in Multiple Sclerosis.
Summary: The Karolinska Molecular Medicine MS Center is focusing on the use of neural stem cells to possibly “regrow” nerves.
- 7. Neuroimmunology Unit, Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden**—Principal Investigator, Tomas Olsson, M.D. **Amount Granted: \$40,000**
Project: Pathogenesis and Genetics of Autoimmune Neuroinflammation.
Summary: This study will identify the variants of disease-regulating genes that are likely to determine the risk for MS, and decipher their function and pathogenic role in autoimmune neuroinflammation. It will also relate genetic associations to environmental exposures and measures of inflammation. The aim is to unravel the multiple causes of MS, and to make way for effective and selective therapy, and even prevention.
- 8. Accelerated Cure Project for Multiple Sclerosis, Waltham, MA**—Principal Investigator, Hollie Schmidt, M.S. **Amount Granted: \$20,000**
Project: MS Repository Program.
Summary: The repository provides scientists with access to a large number of high-quality biological samples and associated data in order to accelerate research into the causes of MS, thereby advancing efforts toward a cure.

For more information on grants, please visit www.montelms.org.



“Do everything possible to live with it [MS] until you can beat it” —Tony LaForet

A CONVERSATION WITH TONY LAFORET

THE MONTEL WILLIAMS MS FOUNDATION: What precipitated your diagnosis?

TONY LAFORET: I was having leg pains and my balance was off. A co-worker even asked me if I was drinking because I was walking like a drunken soldier.

MWMSF: What do you do to maintain your health?

TL: I take vitamins, have regular visits with a medical massage therapist and chiropractor specializing in neurology, take regular naps, and try to control my diet.

MWMSF: When you met Montel, he suggested you begin a healthy regimen. Have you kept up with it, and if so, have you seen any changes?

TL: I try to drink at least one tall glass of “swamp” water (a blend of romaine lettuce, bananas, oranges, strawberries, and blueberries) every day. This seems to help with bodily functions. (I even got my massage therapist hooked on it). I am also trying to avoid flour and yeast and eat more veggies.

MWMSF: How did you start making poker tables?

TL: I worked as a Black Jack Dealer at a Christmas party in 1986. A year later, the owner of the casino night company that ran that event called

me to repair a Craps table. He liked my work so much that he started giving me new orders, and I worked with him on special designs. Then in 1989 he offered to take my wife and me to Vegas in exchange for a table. I was bitten by the bug, and began learning as much as possible about the casino business.

MWMSF: How has your diagnosis impacted your ability to make tables?

TL: It has taken a toll. I have lost most of my arm and leg strength, so I have trouble handling the materials and standing for extended periods.

MWMSF: You were so generous to build a poker table for our inaugural Gala and Pro-Celebrity Poker Challenge. Why did you decide to do this, and what did it mean to you to participate in this event?

TL: I donated the table because I felt that it was something that I could do to pay it forward. The gala was a very humbling and life-changing experience for me, and meeting Montel pushed it over the top.

MWMSF: Any advice for someone who is struggling with his or her diagnosis?

TL: Cry your eyes out, then brush yourself off and do everything possible to live with it until you can beat it. And don't be afraid to ask for help. Be proud to accept help because the time will come when you will be able to reciprocate.