



Alliance for Lupus Research
PREVENT. TREAT. CURE.

For the Alliance for Lupus Research
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Working Together for a Cure The Alliance for Lupus Research hosts 3rd Advocacy Day

Washington, D.C., 03/10/08— On Tuesday, March 4th, advocates for the Alliance for Lupus Research (ALR), on behalf of the 1.4 million Americans with lupus, described their personal experiences with the disease to their Members of Congress. ALR Advocates visited nearly 100 Congressional offices, representing 21 states, and asked their Members to support lupus research funding through the Department of Defense's (DOD) peer reviewed medical programs.

The previous evening, Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. (D-IL), a member of the House Appropriations Committee, pledged his support for the ALR and their advocates' work to find a cure for the disease at the ALR's 2008 *Working Together for a Cure* National Awards Dinner at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium in Washington, D.C. Nearly 300 attendees watched as ALR's Chairman, Robert Wood Johnson, IV, and ALR's President, Barbara Boyts, presented the Congressman with ALR's Public Achievement Award, in celebration of his dedication to eliminating health disparities in our nation.

"I am honored to commit to support the work of the ALR and join the quest for a cure for lupus, a devastating autoimmune disease that largely affects women and minorities -- a disproportionate number of my constituency and a growing number of military personnel and veterans and their family members," says the Congressman.

Lupus causes unpredictable symptoms ranging from fatigue and joint pain to severe organ damage and, too often, can be fatal. Nine out of 10 people who have lupus are women, and the death rate for women is five times the rate of men with lupus. African-American women are three times more likely to have lupus than Caucasian women, and three times more likely to die. Women of Asian, Hispanic and Pacific Islander descent are also more likely to be affected.

"What's worse," continues the Congressman, "the woman most likely to die from lupus is an African-American woman between the ages of 45 and 64. When a disease kills one group of Americans at a much higher rate than another group, that should make us all sick. I've worked to increase federal funding to help eliminate racial disparities in health care, and believe lupus research deserves more funding as part of our ongoing, national effort to reduce disparities."

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p. 2

“As the Congressman describes, lupus hits hardest a traditionally medically-underserved portion of America’s population,” says Barbara Boyts, ALR’s President, “so we are thrilled to have his support for ALR’s advocacy work and his personal commitment to increase the awareness for the need of lupus research among his fellow Members of Congress.”

ALR Chairman, Robert Wood Johnson, says, “We are very proud that the ALR has been successful in its initiative to include lupus as a disease eligible for funding under the Department of Defense (DoD) FY 05 appropriations for its Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP). This listing has resulted in \$5.1 million to lupus research, since 2005, including nearly \$3 million to previously ALR-funded researchers. The ALR, with the support of champions such as Congressman Jackson, will continue to work closely with Members of Congress to ensure that federal funding for lupus research remains a priority in future fiscal year appropriations.”

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The Alliance for Lupus Research (ALR) is a national voluntary health organization based in New York City and founded in 1999. Chaired by Robert Wood Johnson IV, it has become the world's largest private source of lupus research funds and has committed \$50 million to lupus-specific research projects since its inception. The organization's mission is to find better treatments and ultimately prevent and cure lupus by supporting medical research. Because the ALR's Board of Directors pays for all administrative and fundraising costs, 100% of all donations go directly to support lupus research programs. For more information, visit www.lupusresearch.org.