



To educate and support patients, along with their families, by increasing awareness of the disease and improving communication among healthcare providers and the general public.

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## **Holiday 2021**

### **A Note from the Founder**

In the spirit of this holiday season of gratitude, I'd like to express my sincerest thanks to you. The enormous generosity you've shown towards the PA Fund has enabled its programs to continue during these challenging times. Your encouragement, along with your contributions, allow the Fund to thrive while sustaining its mission.

As you know, the PA Fund receives no government funding and relies solely on the support of individuals and corporations. This season is all about caring, so I hope you will find it in your heart to support this important work once again.

Wishing you a joyous holiday season



Patti Allen, Founder

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patti Allen".

## **PA Fund Emergency Grant Program**

With the pandemic creating limitations and stressors on family budgets, the need for financial assistance within the lupus community has been staggering. While the cost of basic life expenses has increased dramatically this past year and a half, the need for short-term financial assistance has never been greater. The continuation of this lupus-related emergency program has been a lifeline for many and a critical component in providing financial aid to individuals living with lupus who apply and are approved. Since Spring of 2021, this grant program has seen a surge in the number of funding requests nationwide, reinforcing the unpredictable nature of the economic climate we live right now.

I am incredibly grateful for the ongoing commitment of three dedicated volunteers - Lupus Research Alliance (LRA) Young Leaders Board members Alison Lee and Brianna Fitzpatrick, along with long-time LRA Board member Jennie DeScherer - who work tirelessly on the Emergency Grant Program Review Committee to ensure each application is properly reviewed before making a final funding determination.

## **Lupus Advocacy Conference and Hill Day-2022**

As the coronavirus evolves and can still sideline those immunocompromised, the LRA's Annual Lupus Advocacy Conference and Hill Day will be held virtually again in 2022 with sponsorship from the PA Fund. Given that Congress has not yet passed the current fiscal year budget, the LRA is waiting to determine the best date for this event. Once scheduled, we will work with the Congressional Lupus Caucus and ask that Congress supports budget requests to increase federal funds for lupus research that will unravel the disease complexity and ultimately deliver more treatment options. Each year, advocates learn how to effectively represent the national lupus community in conversations with their legislators on Hill Day. And everyone can have their voices heard through the LRA's online Legislative Action Center.

## **Support Groups**

Support groups continue to be a critical resource for the lupus community with funding for these groups provided by the PA Fund. This year The Fund welcomed a new support group staffer, Carla Menezes, who is Project Coordinator Patient Engagement at the LRA's clinical arm Lupus Therapeutics. Carla works with the peer facilitator to arrange and run the groups which focus on topics such as community resources, managing one's illness and coping with the emotional challenges lupus presents. These meetings offer a "safe haven" for people with lupus and their families, providing a comfortable, supportive environment and a much-needed sense of community.

## **Mailing Address and Online Donations**

Lupus Research Alliance c/o Patti Allen - PA Fund

275 Madison Avenue, 10th Floor • New York, NY 10016. For online donations, click here or go to:

<http://bit.ly/DonatetoPAFund>