NEW BOARD & STAFF | Representation Matters

**Quinn Brett** (T11 ASIA A) fell while climbing El Capitan and is now a National Parks Service employee and social media influencer with over 16,000 followers on Instagram. Quinn just had a documentary released this year about her journey with an SCI, An Accidental Life.

**Jason Stoffer** (L1) is a former mountaineer, long distance hiker, wild-land firefighter, search and rescue technician, EMT, and Law Enforcement Officer. As CAN Manager, Jason is on the verge of getting an SCI bill introduced in Colorado this year. He also raised $10,000 for U2FP in just a month last year by participating in Team U2FP’s Freestyle Challenge Race (formerly Run-Walk-Roll), using his adaptive bike to ride a 100-mile trail in one day!

**Johnnie Edwards** is the mother of a son with an injury (T6-7), and holds a law degree from the Birmingham School of Law. Johnnie’s son Justus was just featured on the Today show, as he graduated from Berry College in Georgia this year, using a walker to accept his diploma.

**Jim Hamer** is the director of DP Clinical’s SCI Program, where he has managed numerous acute and chronic SCI clinical trials which include drug, device, and stem cell therapy trials. Jim was recently elected to serve as Treasurer for the U2FP Board.

**Lucia Webb** brings a combination of social justice advocacy experience with a background in event and organizational management. As U2FP’s new Operations Director, she has already overseen our largest Team U2FP fundraising year ever.

Background Image Credit: Connections by AmanPreet Badhwar, PhD, CRIUGM, Université de Montréal
U2FP’s Annual Symposium
Breaks Attendance Record

Because presentations were structured thematically around the notion of ‘strategies’ - Advocacy, Collaboration, Clinical Research, Sexual Function, & Regeneration - we were able to highlight some groundbreaking work this year, notably:

• ONWARD, our 2021 Networking Sponsor, had the opportunity to share the details of their transcutaneous/epidural clinical trials. They’ve since completed recruitment for the transcutaneous study, and have just implanted their first proprietary epidural stimulator.

• Neurosurgeon Uzma Samadani showed how she is implanting epidural stimulators in an outpatient setting with effect - and getting insurance to pay for it.

• Watch these sessions, as well as many other great presentations and panel discussions, from this year’s symposium for free: u2fp.org/2021-symposium.html

U2FP did a fantastic job of pulling together so many experts in the field. Anything we can do to promote collaboration and accelerate progress is to be championed.”

- Peter Nowell
$53,800 was raised by Team U2FP participants in 2021 - our highest amount ever!

27 Racers signed up to challenge themselves physically while fundraising to advance the movement for curative therapies.

**Race Events**
- The Bank of America Chicago Marathon
- The Medtronic Twin Cities Marathon & 10 Mile Races
- And our DIY race event, the Run-Walk-Roll*

This was the second year of our DIY race event, where participants designed their own courses and pace. Courses and difficulty levels varied from 5K runners and walkers in the Midwest, a Pacific paddleboard event on the West Coast, to a 100-mile adaptive trike ride through the Montana Rockies!

* The Run-Walk-Roll has been renamed this year to The Freestyle Challenge
Testifying for a Wisconsin SCI Research Grant Bill (AB873)

On April 6th, seven SCI advocates and their families showed up at the capitol in Madison, Wisconsin to testify in support of our $3M SCI Research Grant bill: Max Rammer and his father, Doug; John Martinson; Samantha Troyer; Dr. Murray Blackmore (SCI researcher from Marquette University); Rob Kozarek; and Mike Mohr. This group gave a diverse, powerful account of their struggles with the injury along with strong, evidence-based reasoning for why investing in restorative SCI treatments is the right thing to do. Our Champion, Rep. Jimmy Anderson (who also has an SCI and testified himself on behalf of our bill) said it was some of the most effective and impactful testimony he’s seen in his time as a legislator. Read each advocate’s testimony here: u2fp.org/wi-testimony.html

“I’m excited because [legislation like this bill] is already working in other states, and we can make it work here. We aren’t just requesting money; we are requesting money to be allocated in a really smart way.”

- Mike Mohr (pictured)
Launching Lab Rats

At our Symposium this past fall, we talked for the first time about our nascent effort to actively place individuals with an injury into SCI research labs.

The benefits for the lab are obvious: having a person with lived experience of the injury embedded with their research team helps them avoid all sorts of faulty assumptions and pitfalls, saving them valuable time and money.

Conversely, the ‘SCI Consultants’ - as we refer to them - gain a deep appreciation of the complexities, challenges and constraints faced by a research lab. These collaborative partnerships have the opportunities to produce better, faster treatments, while creating a smarter, more nuanced community of SCI advocates in the process.

“I want to say a few things to any scientist who’s considering doing this. First, it’s strategically smart - it’s gonna make you look good and it’s gonna make your lab better.

But what I can’t say enough is - it feels really good too. It makes coming to work a little bit better. It’s just a really great experience. And I think that you’re gonna look back on your career and think that this is something that you’re really glad that you did.”

- Murray Blackmore, PhD
The Blackmore Lab, Marquette University

Placements
As of this writing, U2FP has coordinated placement of

10 SCI individuals into

3 labs,
with two more individuals in the process of being placed.

Power in Progress
This innovative placement strategy is a win-win for the Scientific & SCI Communities! To learn more, visit: u2fp.org/get-involved/lab-rats.html
Move Me documentary (formerly The Cure Map)

It’s been a long journey, but Kelsey Peterson’s documentary about living with an SCI - *Move Me* - is now on the film festival circuit across the country! So far, the film has been shown or selected at Full Frame Documentary Film Festival, ReelAbilities NYC, and Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festival. Because so many of you helped kickstart the funding for this documentary, it’s worth revisiting how it all got started.

Back in 2015, Kelsey was one of several advocates who joined Matthew Rodreick and others in their successful campaign to pass $5M in SCI Research funding at the Minnesota state legislature (what would become U2FP’s Cure Advocacy Network). This legislative victory gave Kelsey an itch to take the movement to cure paralysis in a more personal and artistic direction. U2FP agreed to become the sole fiscal agent for her nascent film project in 2018. Kelsey worked hard and in 2020 won highly sought after funding from ITVS Open Call to pay for post-production. Since then, the film has evolved into a personal look at Kelsey’s re-engagement with dance (which was her vocation pre-injury). Her participation as a choreographer/performer in Gabriel Rodreick’s performance piece, *A Cripple’s Dance*, anchors much of the film and sends Kelsey in a new direction, reflecting on the tender balance between hope for restored function and living one’s life to the fullest in the present moment.
Sustaining Supporters
Jake Anderson & family
Chris Barr
Kathryn/James Timothy Burns
David Dvorak
Therese Dvorak
Ralph Ertz
Traci Fernandez
Douglas Kedl
Kent New
Sue & Jay Pendleton
Alexander Rabchevsky
Alan Tholkes
Tom Walker
Lori & George Webb
Bob Yant

Monthly Donors
Crista Adamson
Chris Barr
Jeni Belt
Adam Bergman
Dillon Borowicz
Michael & Connie Burris
Rebecca & David Carpenter
Elizabeth Blair Carter
Kate & Jake Chalfin
Richard & Joyce Chalfin
George Chikovani
Kathy Christopherson
Elizabeth Dierdorf
David Dvorak
Traci Fernandez
Noreen Fertig
Jennie Fletty
Charles Foss
Cheryl Fyock
Claudia Garofalo
Monica Goulette
Peter Grahn
Ignacio Leal
Margaret Leardi
Allison Leberman
Jesse Liebman
Chris/Oliver Lupo
Sam Maddox
Anthony Magiari
Yvonne Mauch
Karen Miner
Tori Moore
Robert Mulcahy
Kent New
Faith Noe
Vincent O’Driscoll
Timothy O’Neill
Prudence Osborn
Naomi Plasterer
Alexander Rabchevsky
Ryan Romine
Ben Stear
Scott Stocking
Maranda Summers
Michele (Shelly) Towle
Anthony Waters
Mildred Whiteside
Jane Wierbicky
George Woodworth

2021 Symposium Sponsors
Craig H. Nielsen Rehabilitation Hospital - University of Utah
ONWARD
Craig H. Nielsen Foundation
Global Technology Services
Hong Kong Spinal Cord Injury Fund
Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation
Kennedy Krieger Institute
NervGen Pharma
Push to Walk
Conquer Paralysis Now

DP Clinical
Blackrock Neurotech
The Buoniconti Fund
MyoMyn
NuMotion
Help Hope Live

Individuals
Karen Abate
James Anderson
Steven Appelhans
Peter Baillon
Bruce Bowman
Mark Bradley
Michael Burris
Adele & Jim Crawford
Elizabeth DeMoss
Roger Watts
Susan Donahue
Joseph Donat
Judith Durkee
Ann Dvorak
David Dvorak
Barbara Gage
Margaret Gillan
Ron Gold
David Green
Tim Hopper
Nancy Howe
Daniel Kilduff
Kenichiro Kuninobu
Kate LoCascio
Dan Luther
Rudy Luther
Kevin Moscatiello
Michelle Murdock
Tim Neary
Julie Neustadt
Dan Nicholson
Allan Nishita

Organizations
Amazon Smile
Be Free Foundation
Burns Family Foundation
Corning
Cure Medical, LLC
Dominion Holdings
FLORA FRESH, INC
Git Hub
Giving Foundation
Greg McNeely Fund
Rabchevsky Foundation
Regeneron
Scrivner Family Fund
TRYAbility Neurorecovery Center
United Paralysis Foundation
Varian Medical

U2FP sincerely appreciates the generosity of all our donors. The donors listed above made cash or in-kind gifts or grants totaling $250 or more over the past 12 months and/or contribute regularly as Monthly Donors. We apologize for any oversight in listing donors. Please contact our office to update our records.

2021 Expenditures
2021 Revenue

*These pie charts reflect audited financial information for Unite 2 Fight Paralysis. Unite 2 Fight Paralysis relies almost exclusively on public contributions and grants to provide our services.*