

For Immediate Release

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Ascend Learning Delivers Grant to Beyond Batten Disease Foundation

Employee-driven initiative raises funds for organization focused on identifying and treating rare genetic diseases.

LEAWOOD, Kan. May 21, 2013 – Ascend Learning announced it has delivered a \$17,710 grant to Beyond Batten Disease Foundation (BBDF), an Austin, Texas based nonprofit focused on developing a test to identify and then treat rare chromosomal diseases. The grant was provided by Ascend Learning’s corporate foundation, the Ascend Transforms Foundation.

“Our corporate foundation is focused on supporting organizations that are seeking transformational change within their field. Beyond Batten Disease Foundation is bringing light to an area that is so often overlooked – rare diseases – and creating a foundation on which future treatments and potential cures can be pursued,” said Essie Eisenfeld Davis, Senior Vice President of Human Resources at Ascend Learning.

“We are grateful for the support of Ascend Learning and its employees. Over the past few years we’ve been able to cross some major milestones in the fight against Batten disease,” said Craig Benson, founder of BBDF. “This grant helps us take an even more strategic approach and apply both greater rigor and resources to our work, ensuring that the most important research to treat and cure this horrific disease gets funded.”

Beyond Batten Disease Foundation was founded by Craig and Charlotte Benson in 2008 after their daughter, Christiane, was diagnosed with Batten disease when she was just five years old. Batten disease is a rare and devastating disease that disproportionately impacts the very young. BBDF seeks to raise awareness and money to accelerate research to find a cure, and develop an inexpensive blood test to detect the gene mutations that indicate Batten disease and more than 600 rare diseases. Dr. Stephen Kingsmore, Director of the Center for Pediatric Genomic Medicine at Children’s Mercy Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri, is advancing the foundation’s initial work.

Ascend Transforms Foundation raised money by issuing a challenge grant to its employees, pledging to match dollar-for-dollar every employee donation. During the employee fundraising drive, Craig Benson visited Ascend Learning’s Kansas City-area campus to personally make the case for supporting Beyond Batten’s mission.

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About Ascend Learning

Ascend Learning is a leading provider of technology-based educational, curriculum and assessment solutions for healthcare and other vocational industries, and specializes in delivering high-performance results for students and professionals. Ascend's heritage is rooted in assessment and remediation technology and publishing, with industry-leading products that serve secondary, post-secondary, and professional education markets in nursing, allied health, emergency services, fitness and many other health-science professions. Ascend's family of companies consists of ATI Nursing Education, Jones & Bartlett Learning, ATI Allied Health, Advanced Informatics, National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM), National Healthcareer Association (NHA), Boston Reed, ClickSafety and ExamFX. With approximately 1,000 employees, the company shares dual headquarters in the Boston and Kansas City metropolitan areas. For more information please visit www.ascendlearning.com.

About Beyond Batten

Beyond Batten Disease Foundation works to cure and prevent Batten disease, a rare, inherited neurological disorder that strikes young children, first causing vision loss and seizures, then cognitive and motor impairment, and ultimately death by the late teens or 20s. The foundation raises funds for research and is leading development of an easy and inexpensive, groundbreaking blood test to detect the gene mutations that cause Batten disease as well as 600-plus, other rare but serious and often fatal childhood ailments. For more information, visit www.beyondbatten.org.