

For Immediate Release

SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW OF AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS RESEARCH APPLICATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) advocate Stephen Byer of ALS WORLDWIDE recently participated in the evaluation of research applications submitted to the ALS Research Program (ALSRP) sponsored by the Department of Defense. BYER Was nominated for participation in the program by Dr. Jeremy Shefner of SUNY Upstate Medical Center, Syracuse, NY. As a consumer reviewer, he was a full voting member, along with prominent scientists, at meetings to help determine how the \$6.4 million appropriated by Congress for Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12) will be spent on future ALS research.

Consumer reviewers are asked to represent the collective view of ALS patients, family members, and persons who may be at risk for the disease when they prepare comments on how the proposed research will make an impact on the development of treatments for ALS and the potential impact on patients' lives.

Commenting on her (his) role as a consumer reviewer, Byer said that participation in this program provided a unique opportunity to understand and comment on true state-of-the-art scientific proposals in their earliest stage for the purpose of their further development on behalf of the ALS community.

Consumer advocates and scientists have worked together in this unique partnership to evaluate the scientific merit of ALS research applications since 2007. Colonel Jeffrey C. Leggit, M.D., Director of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, expressed his appreciation for the perspectives of the consumer advocates in the scientific review sessions. "The Consumer Reviewers on each panel are instrumental in helping the scientists understand the patient's perspective and provided valuable insight into the potential impact of the proposed project. They bring with them a sense of urgency and remind all of the human element involved in medical research."

Hundreds of research applications have been reviewed since the programs inception. Scientists applying propose to conduct innovative, high-risk/high-reward ALS research that could ultimately lead to critical discoveries or major advancement in ALS treatment.

More information about the Department of Defense Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Research Program is available at the Website: <http://cdmrp.army.mil>.

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