

Progress in **RESEARCH**

Fall 2025

Dear Supporters,

Not long ago, scientists believed restoring function after spinal cord injury (SCI) was an impossibility. But today, just one year after the FDA approved the ARC-EX® System, more than 25 clinics across the country are delivering this life-changing therapy to people with SCI—and the future of SCI care has never been more promising.

From the beginning, the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation has been committed to defying expectations—to advancing real, patient-centered solutions that not only extend people's lives but also make them more comfortable. In June, we co-hosted the third annual SCI Investor Symposium with Lineage Cell Therapeutics, our first fully virtual gathering. This event fosters critical conversations among researchers, industry, clinicians, and people living with SCI—conversations that will accelerate our dialogue with the FDA on patient-focused drug development.

Our mission is ambitious: to improve every aspect of life after injury—from mobility and bladder and bowel function to cardiovascular health, pain management, and skin integrity. That's why we continue to support bold, high-risk, high-reward projects that push the boundaries of what's possible.

Right now, we're reviewing full proposals submitted through our latest Request for Applications, a process focused on advancing preclinical translational research with direct relevance to the SCI community. The creativity and commitment we've seen in these applications is inspiring—and we're excited to fund a wide range of approaches with the potential to deliver measurable, functional results.

At the same time, our STRIVE (Standardized Testing Research In Vivo Endeavor) initiative is progressing at pace. Data collection is complete across two preclinical models, and we have shared preliminary findings at leading scientific conferences, including the American Spinal Injury Association's annual meeting. These efforts lay the groundwork for stronger, more reproducible science and more strategic future investments.

In research, real progress isn't measured by headlines—it's measured by impact. And thanks to your partnership, that impact is growing. Together, we're reshaping what's possible and building a future where individuals with SCI have access to a diverse range of therapies that restore function, dignity and independence.

With deepest gratitude,

Dr. Marco Baptista

Chief Scientific Officer

Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation



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THE REEVE FOUNDATION AND LINEAGE CELL THERAPEUTICS HOST THE THIRD ANNUAL SCI INVESTOR SYMPOSIUM

In June 2025, the [Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation](#) and [Lineage Cell Therapeutics](#) co-hosted the third annual [Spinal Cord Injury \(SCI\) Investor Symposium](#). For the first time, the event was held entirely online—removing barriers for people affected by SCI and drawing record participation from industry experts, scientists, investors and media.

As in previous years, the Symposium focused on achieving two key objectives: increasing awareness about spinal cord injury research and driving collaboration among companies, academic researchers and those living with or caring for someone with paralysis and increasing investment in SCI.

“This Symposium isn’t just about sharing data,” said Brian Culley, Chief Executive Officer of Lineage Cell Therapeutics. “It’s about creating a ‘working event’ where companies, researchers and people with SCI come together to solve shared problems.”

Throughout the day-long event, thought leaders across biotech shared latest advances alongside honest discussions about the challenges that remain. From regenerative repair technologies and novel drug therapies to wearable devices and brain-computer interfaces, presenters highlighted a range of innovations all aimed at restoring function and improving quality of life after injury.

For Marco Baptista, PhD, Chief Scientific Officer of the Reeve Foundation, the most encouraging aspect of the Symposium isn’t any single technological advance or promising breakthrough. It’s the shift toward patient-focused innovation. “We’re inviting people with lived experience into these discussions to help guide research decisions and address the outcomes that matter most to them,” he said.

Patient advocates, including Jerod Nieder, Robert Paylor and Marco Sorani, shared personal insights about daily life with SCI, reminding attendees that



recovery isn’t just about walking again. Regaining hand function, managing blood pressure, improving bladder control, and reducing neuropathic pain can dramatically improve independence and quality of life. “Any improvement that adds more function, no matter how small, is relevant and meaningful to patients,” said Nieder.

The Symposium also shined a light on areas where research is beginning to close critical gaps. Advances in non-opioid pain management could offer relief for those living with chronic pain. Emerging research suggests that spasticity, a common complication of SCI, may actually serve as a biomarker of recovery potential. And new regenerative approaches—from Schwann cell transplants to antibody therapies and scaffold implants—are offering a glimpse of what may soon be possible for both complete and incomplete injuries.

Despite these advances, participants agreed that scientific progress alone isn’t enough. Patients also need access to therapies, insurance coverage for treatment, and ongoing rehabilitation. The Symposium hopes to address these issues not just through innovation, but also by encouraging stronger cross-sector collaboration.

“This Symposium isn’t about competition. It’s about collaboration,” said Culley. “When we work together, we move faster toward therapies that help people live better and thrive.”

Throughout each of the three SCI Investors Symposiums, investigators have emphasized the same core principles: measure what matters, focus on patient priorities and balance hope with realism. For the scientists, entrepreneurs and advocates who tuned into the 2025 sessions, the message was clear—the SCI community is strongest when working together.

“We need shared standards, shared data, and a shared understanding of what’s important to people

with SCI,” Baptista said. “That’s why this Symposium matters.”

From expanding clinical trial endpoints to advancing plans for a formal Patient-Focused Drug Development meeting with the FDA, meaningful progress is finally within reach—and together, we are building the foundation for what comes next.

Watch all the presentations from the 3rd Annual SCI Investor Symposium at [SCISymposium.com](https://scisymposium.com) or on [YouTube](#). ◦

SCI VENTURES MARKS TRANSFORMATIVE FIRST YEAR

[SCI Ventures](#), a groundbreaking philanthropy initiative co-founded by the Reeve Foundation, is marking one year of bold progress toward curing spinal cord injury (SCI). As the first fund of its kind solely focused on breakthrough therapies for SCI, SCI Ventures is accelerating the path from discovery to real-world impact for the next generation of treatments.

Since its launch in June 2024, the evergreen fund has raised over \$30 million and built a portfolio of seven early-stage companies. Backed by the Reeve Foundation and leading SCI foundations across the U.S. and Europe, and guided by world-renowned neuroscientists, SCI Ventures targets near-term functional improvement, while also backing the ultimate goal of biological repair of the spinal cord.

Most recently, SCI Ventures invested in and partnered with [Healx](#)—a pioneer in AI-powered drug discovery—to identify new treatments for SCI. The collaboration leverages Healx’s cutting-edge platform to prioritize AI-enabled target discovery and drug repurposing, aiming to dramatically accelerate the timeline from scientific insight to clinical application.

A defining strength of SCI Ventures is catalyzing the jump from bench science to first-in-human trials, leveraging its own capital and expertise to attract substantial additional private co-investment. Recent proof points include [EG 427](#)—now enrolling patients in a first-in-human trial of its gene therapy for dysfunctional bladder, a debilitating complication of SCI and [Axonis Therapeutics](#) development of an oral drug advanced to a clinical trial for neuropathic pain, another major priority for the SCI community. This Axonis asset also shows promise for motor-function recovery. These successes underscore SCI Ventures’ ability to unlock additional investment and accelerate promising therapies into the clinic.

SCI Ventures marries philanthropy with the discipline of venture capital. The vehicle reinvests 100% of its returns into additional high-potential companies to keep financing innovation in a sustained way and continue to deliver more options for people living with paralysis. To learn how your support for the Reeve Foundation helps advance this transformative work, please contact Denise Andersen at dandersen@reeve.org. ◦

U.S. SCI RESEARCH FUNDING AT RISK

Despite major strides in spinal cord injury (SCI) research, proposed federal funding cuts threaten to stall progress.

The Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP)—a key Department of Defense initiative—is facing a \$40 million reduction to its Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (SCIIRP). Additional funding threats at the National Institutes of Health could further slow innovation, reducing the number of potential therapies moving toward FDA approval and commercialization.

These cuts come on the heels of the landmark approval of ONWARD Medical's ARCEX®, underscoring how close we are to real breakthroughs—and how devastating it would be to lose momentum now.

The Reeve Foundation's commitment to funding *Tomorrow's Cures* is more critical than ever. As public funding shrinks, more researchers are turning to us to sustain and accelerate their work.

Donate today to help keep SCI research moving forward.

20TH ANNIVERSARY TEAM REEVE®

Before Bernadette Mauro pedaled her hand cycle onto the Verrazzano Bridge for the 2005 New York City Marathon, she pinned a clutch of charms to her sleeve to power her through the miles ahead.

Inscribed with the words *love, courage and hope*, they danced in the corner of her eye as she turned the gears—a reminder of the day's greater mission.

"They represented Chris and Dana," recalled Mauro, Director of Information and Resource Services at the National Paralysis Resource Center (NPRC). "And I wore them on my sleeve so I could look at them along the way."

Christopher Reeve, a fierce advocate for spinal cord injury research, had died suddenly the year before. Then, in the months leading up to the marathon, his extraordinary wife Dana—founder of the groundbreaking NPRC—announced that she had Stage IV lung cancer.

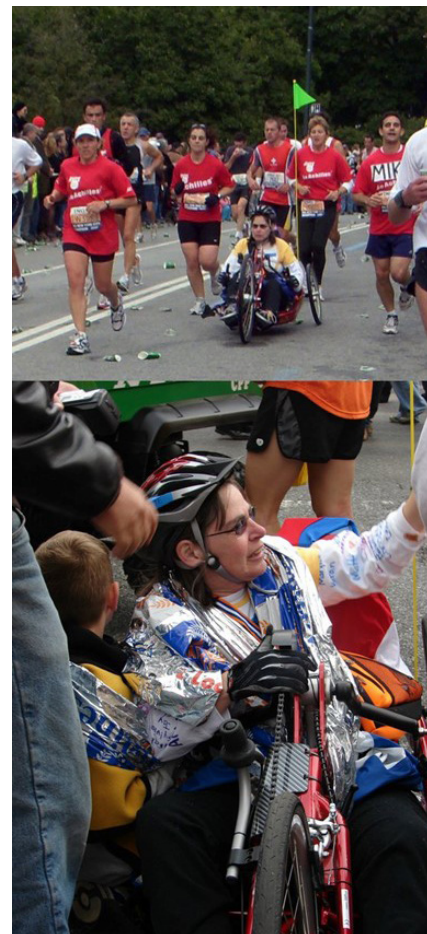
The news left Reeve Foundation staff, including Mauro, reeling. Already grieving Christopher's death, the thought of losing Dana was unimaginable.

And so, Mauro and a handful of colleagues plotted a late breaking entry into the marathon, dubbing the effort Team Reeve. The goal was to not only celebrate the couple's legacy but signal that the critical work they had begun would continue.

"We needed a place where the community could step up, where we could be seen and heard," Mauro says. "It was a way of honoring Chris and Dana. And it gave people the chance to give back."

By day's end, Mauro and 18 teammates had raised \$22,000 for the Reeve Foundation's research program—a respectable amount for a last-minute labor of love.

But that was just the beginning.



Within two years, the New York team surged to 50 athletes and raised an astounding \$410,000. Word began to spread and people across the country raised their hands to ride and hand cycle and walk in marathons from Chicago to New York to London. They tackled surf challenges, triathlons, Tough Mudder competitions and epic cross-country cycling adventures, driven by the same never-give-up ethos that forever defined Chris and Dana.

A family from Los Angeles ran the New York City Marathon together three times in memory of a beloved father and grandfather. A 12-year-old raised \$8,000 swimming a mile in honor of her uncle. A young man who lived with a C2 injury traveled from Ireland and used a sip-n-puff powerchair to achieve his dream of completing a marathon on his own.

“We never doubted that Chris and Dana’s work would continue,” says Mauro. “And Team Reeve helped prove that point.”

This November, Team Reeve will celebrate its 20th anniversary. To date, it has raised more than \$12 million for spinal cord injury research, directly helping advance gains in bladder function, blood pressure regulation and restored hand dexterity, and paving the way for the first FDA-approved trial studying epidural stimulation in patients with paralysis.

But it has also served as a balm for community members.

More than 1500 people have participated in Team Reeve events since 2005, carrying stories of loved ones living with paralysis and of their own injuries. Many return to the team again and again after discovering a powerful new source of support in one another.

Kelly Lamb, Team Reeve’s Senior Manager, signed up for the first of what would become six marathons with Team Reeve in 2014 after her boyfriend, Jon David, sustained a spinal cord injury.

“I was looking for a tangible way to help find a cure,” Lamb says. “But I quickly realized Team Reeve was much more than a fundraiser. The community I found among other athletes and families who understood paralysis was the lifeline I desperately needed.”

That sense of community and connection was exactly what Reeve Foundation Board Director Henry Stifel envisioned when he helped Mauro start Team Reeve.

When Stifel was 17, he was paralyzed in a car accident. It was 1982 and there was no place for his parents to seek support or help. No organization



with its gaze trained on a cure. No peer support to help him understand a newly shaped life.

“I had no idea what was going on,” he says. “It was hard. I was scared. And, while I had the support of my family and friends, I had to face it alone.”

Refusing to accept that nothing could be done for their son, his parents launched the Stifel Paralysis Research Foundation later that year. After Christopher Reeve was injured, he and Dana expanded those efforts in what eventually became the Reeve Foundation.

In the wake of Christopher’s death and Dana’s diagnosis, Stifel knew it was critical to provide a place where the community could come together and carry their work forward.

“And that was the genesis of Team Reeve,” he says.

Over the past two decades, Stifel has served as a roving fan for hundreds of Team Reeve marathoners, zigzagging across New York City in his van to deliver energy boosting H&H bagels and endless encouragement along the way. He has savored every minute of those days as the city’s best self emerges for all the runners, but especially for the families who’ve come from across the country on a mission that is about more than simply finishing a race.

“I’ve always said the main reason this organization exists is because we don’t want anyone going through this situation alone,” he says. “I’m in awe of Team Reeve. It really takes a community to create this kind of movement.”

For more information about Team Reeve, visit the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation website at TeamReeve.org.

PROTECT THE NATIONAL PARALYSIS RESOURCE CENTER: ANNOUNCING NEW SUSTAINABILITY FUND

Paralysis rearranges a life with bewildering speed. A car accident. A stroke. A catastrophic fall on a snowy mountain. A diagnosis of cerebral palsy or spina bifida or multiple sclerosis. A fluke equestrian accident that turns a storybook life into a quest.

When Cheri Hopper sustained a T4 spinal cord injury (SCI), she spent hours on the phone with government agencies and service organizations seeking guidance about complicated insurance coverage, catheters that weren't delivered on time and doctors who didn't know how to treat patients with SCI. Nobody knew how to answer her questions; even worse, no one seemed to want to. It is easy to understand why she expected exactly nothing when she reached out to the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation's National Paralysis Resource Center (NPRC) for help.

Hopper assumed the NPRC would be another dead-end—but soon after she skeptically filled out a form requesting a call, her phone rang. "I was absolutely stunned," she says. "There was this person who called me back and actually cared. I felt like someone turned the light on. I felt like I had a chance."

The NPRC, which has provided transformative resources to millions of individuals and families impacted by paralysis—is threatened. After 20 years of bipartisan support and funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the NPRC is proposed for complete elimination along with other vital programs serving people living with disabilities. If Congress adopts this proposal, it will demolish the only national resource dedicated entirely to supporting people living with paralysis.

Critical Programs on the Brink

Our NPRC Information Specialists are trained to help anyone—from newly paralyzed individuals and their family members to persons who have lived with disabilities for quite some time—as they navigate their changing world and the services available to them. We pull from a wide array of information and expertise to devise personalized plans and approaches to getting individuals living with paralysis back into their communities and a place of well-being quickly.



The breadth and depth of our knowledge and connections spans multiple languages, as well as everything from what to expect in rehab, to the best equipment exchange programs, to peer support networks.

In addition to this flagship resource, the NPRC offers a constellation of services, communities and programs, including Quality of Life Grants Program for non-profit programs and projects geared towards improving the quality of life for individuals with paralysis.

- **Peer & Family Support Program**, which fosters peer-to-peer support, via trained and certified mentors.
- **Military & Veterans Program** designed to support the unique needs of current service members and veterans, regardless of when they served or how their injury was obtained.
- **The Paralysis Resource Guide**, a free, comprehensive, illustrated book for people affected by paralysis and for those who care for them. The guide is available in multiple languages, electronic formats and hard copy.

Join the Movement to Save the NPRC: Donate. Advocate.

The NPRC's services are not just cost-effective—they are literally lifesaving. The Reeve Foundation has established a Sustainability Fund to support NPRC programs well into the future. Because here's a sampling of what would happen without the NPRC:

- Requests from hospitals for peer mentors to support newly injured patients ignored.
- The free library of factsheets and booklets, used every day by thousands of people and their families, discontinued.
- Support groups disbanded.
- The connective tissue of everyday life—accessible transportation options in rural communities, exuberant adaptive sports leagues, assistive technology loan libraries, ramps for bingo halls, and local YMCAs—cut.
- Urgent questions about care and treatment and work and pain unanswered.

Imagine the thousands of people living with paralysis and their families who depend on the NPRC suddenly on their own. Imagine the loss for

hospitals, healthcare workers and communities that are, at this very moment, stronger because of the irreplaceable support of the NPRC.

We are a small organization fueled by a sense of great purpose. The work we did yesterday matters today and will be equally urgent tomorrow. And so, we're asking for your help to protect the mission that drives us, to ensure that we're here when you need us. Donate today at ChristopherReeve.org/donate.

It's also imperative we let Congress know they can't ignore the voices of the paralysis community, and we will not stand idly by as the NPRC and other lifesaving programs are dismantled from the federal budget. Become an advocate and learn more at ChristopherReeve.org/PRCFunding. ◦

REEVE RESEARCH: MEET OUR PARTNERS

Together with our scientific partners, the Reeve Foundation is building alliances to bridge the gap between lab discoveries and successful clinical translations. These are some of the groundbreaking initiatives that represent the future of spinal cord injury research.

.NeuroRestore is investigating epidural stimulation as a potential tool for managing bladder dysfunction, a significant quality-of-life issue for the SCI community. Reeve Foundation support is also helping fund .NeuroRestore's study of novel brain-computer interface (BCI) technology to reverse upper limb paralysis. The inaugural Reeve-funded trial participant has received the implant and the study is continuing recruitment. Both trials, if successful, will support inclusion in ONWARD Medical's research pipeline.

With the **Kessler Foundation**, we are collaborating on a groundbreaking pilot study utilizing Butterfly iQ™ to revolutionize bladder management for individuals with spinal cord injuries (SCI). By introducing the Butterfly iQ™, a state-of-the-art, portable ultrasound device, the study enables individuals with SCI to monitor their bladder volume at home. This innovation has the potential to significantly reduce the risk of urinary tract infections (UTIs).

PsychoGenics, a CNS-focused contract research organization that designs and executes preclinical drug discovery and early development programs, has partnered with the Reeve Foundation on a preclinical grant to develop innovative techniques and technologies to provide standardized, lab research resources that do not currently exist. This project, known as STRIVE, will help accelerate therapeutic development by providing a validated tool to the SCI research community. T8 and C5 research models have been created through this partnership and are being developed for wide distribution. ◦



GOLFING FOR CURES

The Foundation held its inaugural **Team LeGrand Golf Classic**, presented by Prudential at Metuchen Golf and Country Club in Edison, NJ, on July 14. Established in 1931, Metuchen Golf and Country Club has long been a venue for top-level competition. The outing raised over \$100,000 toward the Foundation's mission, with over 120 golfers participating and an amazing list of corporate supporters!

"Golf gave us a reason to gather, but the real purpose was bigger—to fuel research, raise awareness, and remind people that life with a spinal cord injury doesn't mean giving up. It means pushing forward, together," said Eric LeGrand.

This year's **Reeve Golf Classic** returned to teed off on August 18th at the legendary Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY on August 18—one of the nation's most prestigious courses—to raise funds to advance cures for SCI and improve the lives of those living with paralysis. The event, honoring Jeremy London, Executive Partner, Skadden, raised over \$800,000.

London's dedication to the Reeve Foundation is deeply personal and rooted in a longtime friendship with Alan T. Brown, a fellow advocate and director at the Foundation. Witnessing his friend's courage and commitment to helping others following an injury that rendered him quadriplegic more than 30 years ago, Jeremy was inspired and grew to become actively involved with the Reeve Foundation.

The executive partner of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, one of the world's leading law firms, Jeremy has leveraged his position His involvement, alongside the committee, is to



champion participation efforts to raise funds that promote research and enhance the quality of life for individuals and families affected by paralysis, including the work of the Reeve Foundation.

"Watching Alan turn his own story into a mission to help others has been remarkable," Jeremy says. "It's an honor to support him and the incredible impact of the Reeve Foundation—and with the energy and enthusiasm of everyone attending the Reeve Golf Classic, I know there's so much more we can do together to make a lasting difference for those living with spinal injuries." ◦

